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Modern Sermons by World Scholars

VOLUME III

CRAFER TO FITCHETT

CONTENTS

VOLUME III

	PAGE
HE FOUR ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP—*Crafer*	1
HE CHRISTIAN VALUATION OF MAN—*Curtis*	17
HE MIND OF CHRIST THE LAW OF LIFE—*Davis*	31
HE TREASURE-HOUSE OF THE KINGDOM—*Davison*	49
HE PRIMARY MARKS OF CHRISTIANITY—*Denney*	69
IE HEBREW PROPHETS—*Driver*	95
HINGS UNSEEN AND ETERNAL—*Drummond*	123
HE CHAMPION WHO SLAYS THE DRAGON—*Dykes*	141
AN THE MASTER OF HIS ENVIRONMENT—*Edwards*	157
HRIST IN GALILEE—*Fairbairn*	177
HE LIFE BEYOND—*Faunce*	193
HE ULTIMATE ARGUMENT FOR HUMAN HOPE—*Fitchett*	207

CRAFER

THE FOUR ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP

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THE FOUR ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP

Prof. T. W. Crafer, B.D.

'And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he vas parted from them, and carried up into heaven, ınd they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem vith great joy; and were continually in the temple, ɔraising and blessing God.''—Luke 24 : 51-53.

THUS is it with the worship of the ascended Christ that the gospel ends. It was with the worship of the infant Christ :hat it began. These two are the first and :he last stages in the record of men's worship ɔf the incarnate Son of God. Two more such stages may be discerned between them, the ɔne in those frequent occasions when men fell ıt His feet, as conscious mainly of His wonder-working manhood; the other after the •esurrection, when His followers clasped again :he feet of the crucified with a fresh glow of Easter devotion.

And if there is a sense in which the gospel :hus gives us the main features of that devo:ion which men learned from ''only begotten God,'' we may extend its transitory signifi:ance into a permanent teaching of truth, and ıpply it to the worship of the world to-day. We live in an age of some spiritual progress, ɔf much religious and theological advance.

But it is doubtful if this generation, with it quickened and sometimes feverish activities its intense love of all that is practical, can b called an age of worship. Is it not therefor worth while to consider once again what th gospel has to tell us of the worship of th Savior, in order that we ourselves may an swer more fully the essential demands o worship which come to us as Christian men and that we may realize more definitely th component parts of that attitude toward ou God which marks our deepest humility an therefore our highest exaltation; that effor through which, and through which alone, al our weak human endeavors will be accepte in the face of the beloved?

And perhaps such an investigation may b made most practical by a study of the wor "worship" as the gospels apply it to men' relation to the Son of Man. We may remar at the outset as worthy of note that the word I worship (προσκυνέω), is oftenest used i this connection (ten times in all) by that dis tinctively Jewish evangelist whose acquaint ance with the Scriptures would incline hi to connect the word with the earlier worshi of Jehovah Himself. But this use is not quit confined to Matthew. Each of the other Gos pels contains a single instance, and in al three cases a new and therefore valuable fea ture is brought to light.

It is as the outcome of such a study we ar

able to discern four main types of worship. The first is the worship of the infant Christ, and its characteristic features are praise and adoration, oblation and sacrifice, revealed as they are in the prostration of the Magi and their costly offerings. The second and most frequent type is worship of the ministering Christ, often paid only to His exalted human power, and generally by those at the circumference of the little circle that surrounded Him. This kind of worship has its chief reference to the person; not of the Savior, but of the worshiper; and always reveals some sense of personal benefit, either eagerly sought after or already accepted. In this type, an outwardness is traceable in all cases which reveals itself in a declaration of one of three things:

(a) Need, as in the case of the demoniac among the tombs, who (Mark tells us), in the struggle of his divided-consciousness, first worships, and then can only pray, "Torment me not." To this we must add the leper begging to be healed; Jairus praying for his daughter's life; the Syrophenician woman with her persistent request; Mary after the death of her brother Lazarus, the father of the lunatic boy, and the rich young ruler with his yearning for salvation.

(b) Conviction, as shown by the wondering mariners when the storm was stilled, and (as John records for us) by the man born blind.

(c) Thanksgiving, as when the Samaritan leper alone returned and (tho in this one instance the actual word for worship is not used) "fell at his feet, giving him thanks."

This second type is succeeded by a third, when the ministry has ended in the passion, and the crucified Christ is restored once again to His faithful followers. Here the feature is the exact opposite—not outwardness, but inwardness; the kindling of the feelings, the emotion of loving hearts at this new and unexpected sight of wounded side and nail-pierced hands. Such is the worship of Mary Magdalene and her companions; such are the feelings of the eleven themselves as they see their Lord again on a mountain in Galilee.

And the fourth and last type marks yet another phase. It is the worship, not merely of the heart, but of the spirit; not of Christ crucified and risen, but of Christ ascended. For there was yet more to be revealed. Mary thought to clasp her Master's feet and return to the old earthly relationship. But it was not to be—she needed telling that her devotion would not be merely as before, and soon should undergo a new change. So, while one record simply says the woman worshiped Him, another adds the special lesson she received—"Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended." But when the ascension was fulfilled, then the disciples rose at last to worship that was truly spiritual. In words

which are perhaps an afterthought or the result of later knowledge, Luke tells us that ere they returned from Bethany to praise and joy within the temple, they worshiped Him who had vanished into the spiritual sphere from before their eyes. Far different worship this from the outward reverence of those who claimed the ministering Christ as their helper, broader, too, than that inward glow of personal love which had greeted the risen Lord. Nor did the adoration of the infant Christ by the wise men themselves attain to such a height. We reach the climax of devotion in the spiritual detachment and self-effacement of these disciples, parted as they were from their Lord and yet conscious of a higher union, and rejoicing in the name of all mankind that the good news of the gospel was complete and the Redeemer's work fulfilled.

Such, then, are the essential features and main divisions of worship as we learn them from the Gospels. And the evangelic cycle of devotion which they suggest for our own use may be summarized as follows: praise and adoration, coupled with sacrifice; declaration of our need for ourselves and also for our brethren, of our conviction and of our thanksgiving; inward and personal devotion of the heart; and the uplifting and detachment of the spirit. But does all this suggest an elaboration of worship which is unworthy of its spirituality, a dissecting of instincts

which only tends to make them unreal, a stereotyping of the expression of them which gives them an unspiritual formality? Rather may it stand as a protest against that spirit which regards devotion as outside the possibilities of scientific reasoning and systematic arrangement, and treats it as a simple practise which will take care of itself without a conscious intellectual effort. True worship is at least as complex as the nature of man, and to ignore its difficulty is the first step toward neglecting its performance.

The first truth to which these four gospel types of worship might lead us is that all of them are needed—nay, none of these by itself constitutes truly Christian worship; so that, as we study the history of the faith, we find that again and again failure has come through pressing unduly one or other of them to the weakening of the rest. And it is from these failures of a partial worship that we may learn to make our own complete. It is true that such an investigation as this has many limitations. The broad theme of the worship of the triune God has been narrowed into men's relation to the single person of God the Son; and yet we may answer that there are many principles of devotion wherein the truths that concern a part may be made to have their application to the whole.

Let us look at the first type, which tells of praise and adoration and of sacrifice. It was

not long in the history of Christianity before it was exaggerated at the expense of the rest. No sooner had the fourth century given freedom to worship by drawing it forth from the catacombs into stately basilicas than men began to attempt a great and ever-greater sacrifice of public devotion, till at length every three hours saw a service in the daily cycle. But such an oblation was a heavier burden than the Church could bear; it could only be offered by those who took up worship as their life's profession; for the rest, the sacrifice demanded became so vast that they ceased from daily worship altogether.

And if those who sacrifice may give unfittingly, so with those who adore. In the history of the Eucharist, what shall we say of that adoration which begins with the profoundest reverence for the sacred body and blood, and ends with a service where hungry souls must be content to adore the heavenly good and not to take it. And the second type, the outward, human, manward side of worship, we see in that instinct which made the men of Palestine worship the Savior only in their need. We can not realize too strongly that there is far more in worship than this utilitarian side, that it is not a practise that concerns us only, an exercise to be gone through at such times and in such ways as suit our personal needs and fancies; but that God needs it, too, needs it continually, and

that there are heights of devotion and the magnifying of His holy name well within the normal Christian life, which are quite irrespective of our own condition and our human wishes.

And what of the third type, the inward emotion of the heart? Here there is the possibility that worship may become too exclusively a thing of the feelings, dependent on the caprice of sentiment. It is here that there manifest themselves in every school of thought, be it Catholic or Protestant, the extravagances of worship. What, on the one side, could mar the proportion of the faith more than such a cult as that of the Sacred Heart, originating in a man's fantastic visions, and appealing to its devotees simply on sentimental grounds? And side by side with this we may place those strange occurrences and extravagant emotions that befell the early Methodists at Bristol. No, full and lasting devotion lies only partially in the feelings of the heart.

And further, to concentrate the feelings on the personal worship of Christ crucified, may mean the encouraging of what is morbid and unreal; for it turns to Him as He was before the ascension; not as He is to-day. And a historic interest in the past can not equal a living interest in the present. If we approach our worship as those who knelt again to their Master before He ascended, there may be a

meaning for us, too, in the reproof, "Touch me not, for [to your mind] I am not yet ascended," a meaning which we may realize through a growing lack of present reality in our devotion.

Can it be that the failure of the Church to pronounce on social questions and remedy social evils has been due to this narrowed spirit of devotion, which does not look enough to the world-wide meaning of the incarnation and the present majesty of Christ, but dwells only on the revealing of the crucified and risen Master to the individual soul? If so, we may perhaps learn the antidote by looking to the more healthy devotion and manly labors of such as Charles Kingsley, and by humbly following the line, alike of worship and of work, which has been laid down for us by one who ever taught us to connect most with common life the incarnation and its great result—the exalting of a real humanity to heaven. And even with the fourth type there is a danger of exaggeration at the expense of the other parts of worship. We must look on the disciples' spiritual worship of their ascended Lord, not as a mere substitute wherein they might straightway forget and despise all that had gone before, but simply as the climax to which the earlier forms had led them, the sum which must contain the rest.

There is and long has been a tendency with

some to insist exclusively on what they sometimes call the spiritual in contrast with the mechanical side of worship. And yet to fulfil the inward without a corresponding outwardness is a doubtful practise for the majority of men. The outward forms of worship may or may not be mechanical; but they are the only safe test and proof of a systematic spirituality. To reject kneeling at holy communion, as many did in the sixteenth century, or the observance of Lent, as some do in our own, or to think that any other communion can supersede that of the sacrament, involves assuming a grave personal responsibility to provide a real spiritual substitute which is not too thin and ethereal for a spirit which is now bound to a mortal body. Worship, as we see it in the gospel, shows us no short cut to spirituality, the very outwardness of the word προσκυνέω (I worship) forbids it; nay, there could be nothing more significant than the closing words of that final sentence which shows us gospel worship at its highest: "And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple blessing God."

But just as the exaggeration of one part of devotion may spoil the proportion of the whole, so worship will be most real to ourselves and most acceptable to God, according as the various parts are truly and proportionately blended. I would direct your thoughts

to the help and encouragement that each of the four successive types may bring us as we apply them one by one to our worship and its present needs.

It sometimes seems as tho to filch valuable minutes from a busy week-day and spend them in church or college chapel, is either an impossible or at least an unjustifiable practise. And it is then that it may bring us both help and guidance to remember that, for the worker, sacrifice of busy moments takes the place of gold and frankincense and myrrh, and not only fulfils the first requirement of worship, but goes far to insure that the time so given will be one of true adoration of Him who has given us our time, our life, our opportunities.

And outward expression of devotion, be it the declaration of need, of conviction, or of thanksgiving, is a solemn duty even when we only feel its outwardness. Joining others in worship or repeating certain formula of prayer, may begin from earthly considerations or less exalted motives; but heaven's love has still its store of unexpected blessing for those who come, and its power to call forth their answering love; so that the man whose distracted worship once was but the cry, "Torment me not," may be found some day sitting at the feet of Jesus.

And we may here urge that outward postures have themselves a value which we are apt to decry for the very reason that it has

been exaggerated. One of the most obvious shortcomings in the worship of our country is the objection of so many to fall down and worship on their knees. At one of the most characteristic services of modern religious effort—a pleasant Sunday afternoon for men—one is struck first by the lusty singing and the keen listening of each and all, and then by the strange fact that when it comes to prayer, not a single man of perhaps many hundreds can be seen actually upon his knees. We must learn to go back once more to the primitive reality of those who fell down upon their face at the Savior's feet; and if we would have our worship a true and humble act of soul and spirit, we must make sure first that it is a true and undissembled act of body. To succeed in teaching this elementary truth might mean the first movement toward an age which is more fully one of worship than our own.

Yet without the emotion of the heart worship is a dead dry form; it is that which gives to all devotion its life and warmth. But it can not always be present. Frequent dryness of devotion should grieve us, but it must not wholly cast us down. All we can do is to fit ourselves to hear the voice of Jesus, to go where we may hear it, to use words of devotion to which it may be the answer, and then the Magdalene's privilege will increasingly be ours. The ideal of every act of wor-

ship should be this: that it shall not cease till it is accepted, till He reveals Himself through whom we plead. "Jesus saith unto her, Mary." So may we hear the whisper of our very name; so may our answer—our "Rabboni"—come in a rekindling of our effort and our worship, of our work and of our love.

Perhaps the strongest mark of the worship "in spirit and in truth" of the ascended Lord and the Father to whom He has returned, and the Holy Spirit who is the helper of our worship, is detachment—detachment not from the forms and parts of devotion which have led us up to this, but from the idea that devotion affects ourselves alone; detachment, not from the things of common life, from our brethren's needs and the world around us (for all this must find a place within the circle of our prayer and praise), but from all selfishness and earthliness of heart.

So shall we follow the first disciples on their exultant way from Bethany, and walk along the path of Christian joy.

CURTIS

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION OF MEN

OLIN ALFRED CURTIS

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THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION OF MEN

OLIN ALFRED CURTIS, D.D.

"Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh; even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more."—2 Cor. 5 : 16.

PAUL reaches the text by a movement so tumultuous with sudden turns of thought that we are reminded of a mountain torrent rushing hither and thither after a storm. And yet there are in this movement important points of discernible connection. The trying situation at Corinth reminds the apostle of his afflictions. Applying to these afflictions his Christian faith, they are seen to be light passing things, which work out "more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." This glorious reward brings to mind the heavenly body—"a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens." Then, after a most characteristic indirection, he first touches the judgment-seat of Christ, and then turns swiftly to the strenuous feature, the moral earnestness, of his own preaching—"knowing, therefore, the fear of the Lord, we persuade men." But here Paul finds no place for pause. Quickly he thinks: "My motive is not one of

mere moral urgency. 'The love of Christ constraineth' me. It is the infinite love of the Lord Jesus for men which has seized me, which masters me, which drives me, so that I must preach as I preach, so that I must do as I do, whether I am considered sober of mind or bewildered by madness." Nor even at this attractive point is it possible for the apostle to stay. He is eagerly immediate. He is like a world on the verge when about to plunge into a new epoch! His verge is the love of Christ, and his epoch is the expression of that love in the death of Christ, the awful deed of redemption. Let us recall the mighty passage: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again. Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh; even tho we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more."

The meaning of the text may be roughly given in this paraphrase: "My old standpoint of valuation was that of the flesh, and I regarded even Christ Himself from that standpoint; but now I estimate all things from the standpoint of redemption. From my new standpoint, Christ is our Savior, and men get their worth from the fact that He, for their sakes, died and rose again."

To appreciate the Christian valuation of men, we need to apprehend Paul's new standpoint. And for such apprehension, we need to note, with a sufficient measure of emphasis, the rejected standpoint which the apostle terms "after the flesh."

Now, this peculiar expression — "after the flesh"—what does Paul mean by it? Paul means not what we mean by "fleshly," and not what we usually mean by "worldly"; but rather what many writers mean when they use the term "naturalistic." To study men with the spirit and method and conclusions of sheer naturalism; to hold that their total being is in a process of nature, under fixt law, unrelated to a gracious and supernatural Providence; to esteem merely their natural powers and relations and possibilities; to regard men as worthy or profoundly significant outside of Christ and His salvation—any such valuation of men, whether scientific, or theological, or popular, is to know them after the flesh. And it should be said further that this naturalistic valuation may come from either a person with no Christian experience, or a person whose Christian experience is (to use and dignify an expressive Americanism) "overslaughed."

Naturalistic judgments are now made in our extreme appreciation of actual performance. There is a colloquialism which has caught (as colloquialisms are wont to do) a

significant feature of our life — "making good." "Yes, I admit that he did have a noble purpose and that he did make a hard fight, but—but he did not make good." The man's motive does not count, his intention, his self-sacrifice, his dream, does not count; nothing counts but actual performance. Here is Thomas Rainey's failure as sketched in a New York newspaper:

Shorn of his wealth and enfeebled by age and ill-health, Dr. Thomas Rainey, who spent twenty-five years of his life and $600,000, his entire fortune, in an endeavor to promote the building of a bridge across the East River, between Manhattan and Long Island, quietly stole from his home at 349 Lexington Avenue, Manhattan, yesterday morning, and, alone and unnoticed, made his first trip afoot across the new Queensboro Bridge, which he has always looked upon as the successful rival that supplanted his pet project and left him stranded financially in his old age.

Dr. Rainey is nearly 85 years old, and made a pathetic figure as he shuffled along, his steps feeble and uncertain, his former towering frame shrunk and bent. He wore a pair of house slippers, a soft cap, and a sackcoat, and had no overcoat.

Unknown to the group of young policemen who are stationed at the Manhattan end of the bridge, Dr. Rainey was indulgently humored in his desire to cross the bridge, and was informed that when he reached the Long Island City side he might find a conveyance to bring him back.

"This is my bridge," said the doctor. . . . "At least it is the child of my thought, of my long years of arduous toil and sacrifice. Just over there," pointing to a ruined heap of stone along

the river front, "are the old towers of my bridge, which I began to build many years ago. I spent all I owned on the project, and then New York, with all its wealth and power, came in and took away my possessions, and now in my old age I am left in ill-health and alone to eke out my remaining days."

The facts are not sufficiently at hand, to deal with this utilitarian instance, either as a question of municipal legality, or as a question of business economy; but there is one thing which stands out like a spruce-tree against the sky; namely, a man with a splendid idea and a more splendid enthusiasm was allowed to fail, and break his heart, and suffer untold agony, all because he did not have power enough to drive his dream out into the actual deed. Thomas Rainey needed our help years ago; he will get some time—perhaps—a memorial tablet, or a poem of laudation! That is our inexpensive way!

Again, naturalistic judgments are made in our philanthropy. Here we are to consider our most noble efforts to benefit our unfortunate fellow men. We give our money and our time to every sort of good cause. We live in the slums, and are friends of the poor, and create joys for the unhappy, and try to reform the drunkard and the criminal. We work to banish every phase of selfish individualism, to make society realize that a man's claim upon us "depends, not so much upon

the size of his manhood, as upon the size of his need."

To this large-minded philanthropy, which is the most beautiful and hopeful characteristic of our age, what would Paul say? He would be likely first to say what he once wrote to the Romans: "Glory, honor, and peace to every man that worketh good." Then, I think, he would add: "But allow me to show to you my new standpoint where it becomes impossible to think of men and to labor for men merely according to their natural and temporal needs."

In our religion also we have these naturalistic judgments. This is a point of the utmost importance, and yet a point not easily made real and convincing to the modern mind, so far away are we from the realm in which Paul thought and felt and acted. The finest editorial which I read during the great coal strike was published in a Christian journal of extensive influence. This editorial, on "The Brotherhood of Man," was a perfect specimen of the popular religious writing of to-day. Attractively it exprest the noblest sentiments — sentiments, indeed, which were not merely ethical, but profoundly religious; and yet there was in the editorial not so much as a suggestion of Christian peculiarity. That God is the Father of all men; that by the very fact of inherent manhood a man is our brother; that we all, regardless of color or

endowment or station, are in one divine plan, with the same possibilities in destiny—this truth of the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man, is certainly an important religious truth, and is as certainly constituent in Christianity; but, taken without addition or transformation, it can be so stated or so emphasized as to yield a non-Christian total.

The bold assertion that the whole being of Christianity is to be found in the Sermon on the Mount is widely away from the fact. There is a progressive movement in the history of redemption. The mount on which our Master preached was but a place of prolog for the very different mount on which our Savior died. A sinner, forgiven and "hid with Christ in God," quickly and eagerly moves on from "our Father who art in heaven" to "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" His stopping-place, his Christian finality, is Mount Calvary. James Montgomery, in his well-known hymn, has caught not only the Christian idea, but also the intensity of the Christian emotion:

> Here I would forever stay,
> Weep and gaze my soul away;
> Thou art heaven on earth to me,
> Lovely, mournful Calvary.

Surely we all understand that every worthy religious truth, and every right philanthropic purpose, and even the most sane utilitarian

valuations of men, can be truly and wisely related to Christianity. And much more than this we may affirm. The Christian religion can give profounder meaning and finer beauty to every human instinct, to every human relation, to every human duty, and to every human endeavor, whether in art, or in science, or in business, or in political life. The fact is that oftentimes individuality itself is made alive in Christ. Our Lord can take every individual item in one's nature and transform it into a full, vital feature of manhood. The Christian religion does not deaden men into invariant and uninteresting commonplace. Out of Christ, many a man was but a hint of a man—a vague, meager entity wanting to be a man—possibly trying to be a man—his nature like a frozen garden full of hopeless seeds — then Christ, the uncreated Son of God, touched the frozen garden with divine heat, and every seed was quickened and made to grow until the man's whole tangle of individuality burst into bloom. Something like this seems to have been in the mind of Wordsworth when he wrote his fifty-eighth sonnet:

But when He, who wore
The crown of thorns around His bleeding brow,
Warmed our sad being with His glorious light,
Then Arts, which still had drawn a softening grace
From shadowy fountains of the Infinite,
Communed with that Idea face to face.

The new standpoint from which is made the Christian valuation of men, Paul gives in the words already quoted: "One died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again." The significant phrases in this passage are these:

"One died for all"; that is, the death of Christ was intended for all men.

"Therefore all died." Inasmuch as the death of Christ was intended for all men, it belongs to all men. It is their death, in property right, and in essential meaning, precisely as if every man of them had himself died that death.

"But unto him." Because a man owns this death of Christ, he can live a peculiar life, a life "unto him."

"And rose again." Just as every man owns the death of Christ because it was intended for all, so every man owns the resurrection of our Lord because that likewise was "for their sakes." This human ownership of our Lord's resurrection becomes to the responsive Christian believer both his ground of certainty as to immortality, and a contribution to the rich peculiarity of his inner relation to Jesus Christ. Writing to the Philippians (3 : 10 and 11), the apostle says: " . . . that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, be-

coming conformed unto his death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead." This means, as I grasp it, not at all that immortality itself is conditional, but that the personal assurance of immortality belongs only to him who has a triumphant fellowship with the crucified and risen Savior.

The spirit and content of the Pauline way of regarding men are to the effect that every man, simply because he is a man, and, therefore, one for whom Christ died, has actual, inherent title to the death and resurrection of our Lord. Thus, the Adamic humanity, that natural, racial democracy which inspired Robert Burns to sing: "The man's the gowd for a' that!" is transformed into a new democracy of common fundamental significance in Christ. And because a man has this inalienable title to what Jesus Christ has graciously done he has the possibility of a new and peculiar life. Sometimes, as here, Paul calls it a life "unto Him." Again, it is a life "in Christ Jesus." Again, it is a life where Christ is "formed in you." And in Colossians we find, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." By these and other expressions the apostle means that a believer is by faith so related to his Savior as to be Christ-empowered. The man is no longer a mere natural item in the universe of law, but is in dynamic reciprocity with the Son of God; and so is "strengthened with all power, according to the might of his glory."

The Christian climax here appears. This Christ-empowered man now lays hold of a new destiny; namely, the triumphant and supernal destiny of the final brotherhood of redemption, which in Christ Jesus is to actualize, through everlasting fellowship and service, the divine purpose of the death and resurrection of our Lord. In that fellowship and service, the worth of every redeemed member is the worth of the entire brotherhood as organized in Christ and augmented by Christ and glorified through Christ.

Therefore, the Christian valuation of men can not be "after the flesh," but must be redemptional. The profoundly significant thing is not what a man is under natural law and in natural relations and economies, but what he is under the grace of God, what he is under the plan of salvation, what he may be and become and inherit by means of the atonement and regeneration and completion in his personal Savior. We need to break away from the dreary bondage of the conventional estimate, and discover the Christian majesty of manhood. We need to see, with Paul, that the value of a man is as vast as the immensity of his possibility in the Lord Jesus Christ. This morning my meditation turned into a prophetic vision. The change in my mood came as swiftly and as gloriously as daybreak rises and spreads over the sharp edge of a high mountain. I saw the Christian

Church abandon her half-Christian spirit and method and teaching. As if in the surprize and enthusiasm of sudden discovery, she cried out: "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh." Then, with infinite sympathy and infinite courage, she took the millionaire, who had become her one means of existence; who, for many years, had molded her ambition and determined her policy, and firmly placed him in the precise place of peril and possible salvation which he holds in the New Testament. Then, with a new confidence, she approached the socialist, and offered him, in place of his economic brotherhood, a real brotherhood, the brotherhood of redemption. Then, without any "modern attraction," or any ingenious adjustment, or any subtle compromise, she went into the factory, into the slums, into the market-place, and into every dark and distant corner of the earth, preaching in the Holy Ghost: "Jesus Christ died, and his death, and his death alone, has made possible the forgiveness of your sins and your complete salvation."

DAVIS

THE MIND OF CHRIST THE LAW OF LIFE

OZORA S. DAVIS

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Pres. Ozora S. Davis, D.D.

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 2 : 5.

There have been various ways of regarding the life and character of Jesus. One of these has been to consider the earthly acts and deeds of the Master. Almost every month registers the appearance of a new life of Christ, in which the attempt is made to set forth in some novel light the days and the deeds of Jesus. The subject seems to have a perpetual charm, and men are eager to examine anew the ground, to consider again and again the critical questions involved, and out of it to construct a picture of the earthly life of the Christ.

There is an interest in this endeavor which warrants it, and it will perhaps never be a completed task. So long as the love of the human heart is drawn out to the Christ, so long will men and women seek to know every detail of those deeds so full of love and help for human need.

Long as the biographers have worked, however, and patiently as they have toiled, they have not yet constructed a perfect biography

of Jesus, and probably never will. The materials for it are not to be had, and there can not be wrought out of the records enough to give us the complete report of all that Jesus did and said in His earthly life.

And even if there were to be had a complete record of the acts and the words of Jesus, that would not give us really the Master. For the life of a man consists in something more than the deeds that he does and the words that he speaks. So there must be something more than this to convey to us the full sense of the life of our Lord on earth.

It is because this lack has been felt that there always has been the attempt to treat the life of Jesus in the way of imaginative interpretation rather than by means of strict and accurate narrative.

If the output of biographies of Jesus is large, there is hardly a smaller number of books published in which the writers attempt to use the imagination and interpret to us sympathetically the spirit of the life of Jesus. It is not necessary for this work to know that this or that event really took place. There is no discussion of the miracles. The question is, What sort of a person is He about whom such a story would have been told? Granted that the event may not have happened just as it is reported, a great many persons thought that it did. Now what kind of a man must he have been about whom any

considerable number of persons would believe such a report?

You see how important that question is, and how, through the use of the imagination, it may be possible to gain a clearer idea of the real character of a person than we could secure by the most perfect record of the details of his daily life.

There is a definite lack even here, however, and the whole character of Jesus can not be portrayed even by the highest results in the art of literature or painting.

Painting has done much. More people are reached by the picture than by the spoken word. I am sure that the German artist Hofmann has represented Christ to more men and women than any single biographer during the last generation. For example, his "Christ in the Temple," or the "Rich Young Ruler," has gone where no books go, through the reprints, into countless homes.

It is probable that the conception of the purity and the sacrifice of the nativity has been represented more perfectly by art than in any other way. There are thousands who have not read the first two chapters of Luke, or the accounts of the annunciation in any biography, who are yet familiar with some one of the great Madonnas of sacred art.

Men have always obeyed the demand of their reason and have gone on to attempt to give some explanation of the life and char-

acter of Jesus. Theology is as necessary to religion as its appropriate science is to our knowledge of the natural world. Men do not write books on theology for the mere love of it. Theology is the answer of the thinking mind to the facts of the religious life as they are found in the daily experience of living men.

So, in the experience of living men, is found this fact of Christ. Persons are swayed by their love for Him. Living men find new life in relation to Him. There is nothing unreal about this. It is as definite and valid as any fact of the physical or the mental life. So long as we are endowed with the powers of reason, so long we must attempt to give an intelligent explanation of this fact. So far as Christian theology has to do with the person of Christ, it is simply trying to give a reasonable explanation of the fact that it finds in the heart of modern life. The astronomer or the biologist is no more entitled to honor than is the Christian theologian who is seeking in his theology to furnish a true biology of the Christian experience of living men.

We must recognize, however, that the full truth regarding Jesus is not yet reached by any or all the views of His person that have been shaped by men who have thought deeply on the facts of the Christian experience. Those views are very different, and men hold them tenaciously and defend them fiercely,

sometimes, it would seem, almost in contradiction to the spirit of Jesus Himself.

The doctrinal explanations are not enough to explain or interpret Jesus to the world today.

It is after a consideration of all these various attempts to make the life and character of Jesus plain to the modern world, that we come to the consideration of a fact that has not been recognized until comparatively recently. It is the fact that the New Testament bears witness to the mind of Christ. By this we mean something more than the sum of the thoughts of Jesus. The total amount of His knowledge of the world is not what is included in His "mind."

Perhaps it might be put in the words, "self-consciousness"—if by that we mean His habits of thought exprest in His deeds. It gathers up the total of the way in which He thought of Himself and of the universe and the manner in which He related Himself to His God and His fellow men. It has to do with the motive forces that underlay His conduct. It gathers up all that He was conscious of as He attempted to live His own life and to do the work in the world that He thought God had called Him to do.

Now this is something far greater and far more precious than all knowledge or imaginary interpretation or doctrinal statement about Jesus. In many ways it is the modern

discovery of Jesus. Here was not only a definite person in history whom we are warranted in attempting to understand by every means of criticism and historical research that we can command; but here emerges a definite self-consciousness which we can know and also appropriate. In this man motive takes on a supreme and perfect expression. We see how the human soul can acquit itself in the presence of the greatest experiences that life can bring to the human spirit. There is not a phase of human life which does not pass before our eyes in the experience of this man, and in it all we see the human soul express itself in the way that our highest ideal of our own soul bids us express ourselves.

This is the greatest fact in all the world so far as human knowledge is concerned. It is far more important to know what the spirit of man can do in the presence of all the facts of life, than it is to know what the constitution of the material universe is or what the laws are that govern it. This fact of the consciousness of Jesus, set into its definite relation to the life and the needs of to-day, is the supreme fact of all the world. Let us seek now to analyze it a little:

The first item of the self-consciousness of Jesus, the central thing in the mind of Christ, is the reality of God. It simply filled all His being. It is no more possible to comprehend Jesus apart from this fact than it would be

to comprehend the visible world apart from the sunlight.

For Jesus, God was the loving personal Father. This filled all the daily life of Jesus and made the central reality of His being. Touch His life at any point, and you discover that it is electrically charged with this reality. The fact of the reality of God leaps from His life at every contact. He is a natural man in all His intercourse with His fellow men; and yet you can not escape the peculiar impression that in every relation there is this outstanding fact—it is colored and controlled by His sensitiveness to the reality of God. This does not seem an intrusion in the case of the life of Jesus, and there is nothing artificial in it. You soon come to expect it. The boy asks His mother if she has not known Him well enough to expect that He would be busy with the interests of His heavenly Father; and we soon come to the point where we seek Him in the temple because there is the natural place where we expect to find Him.

So, as the atmosphere bathes the earth by its flood and holds in the heat that supports the life of the earth, this great fact of the reality of the personal God is the very atmosphere of the life of Jesus.

This first item of His consciousness is the first lesson of the text. Let this mind be in you, means simply this: act from the motive of Jesus and make God as real as He did.

We are not bidden to pretend that there is a Father in heaven to whom our lives are dear; but we are bidden to make this fact the reality of our daily faith and practise as simply as Jesus did. The fact that He was able to do it makes the command valid; for we can do what He did.

The word religion probably means to bind back or to bind together. The central idea in it is that of a relationship. So far as we can define religion, it consists in relationships. Jesus stood in a constant personal relationship of love, trust, and obedience to the personal God whom He called Father. This is the second item of His consciousness which is valid for us.

There are many men who have a general idea of the fact of God, but who are not personally conscious of any relation to Him. It is as tho one were to be on the earth and yet be never conscious of the least relationship to it. With Jesus the reality of God became a definite item of personal experience. God not only was, but He was for Him. This meant, for one thing, that on the divine side Jesus was conscious that He was the object of the personal love and care of God. You will discover that this is one of the most evident characteristics of the life of Jesus. He never failed in the consciousness that the love of the Father was tenderly over Him.

How much this means to our present human

life! We need to be ransomed from the fears that overthrow us and the sins that beset us by the consciousness that God is near us and taking care of us in all our ways. That is the greatness and the glory of religion. When it is deep and true, it brings this assurance and this peace. Jesus had it all the time. He made real this fact of the loving care and the tender kindness of God in all the details of His daily life.

On the human side, moreover, this relationship to God meant to Jesus the allegiance and the loyalty of His answering human will. He was sure that He had a response to make to the will of God and this He sought to render in a simply obedient life. Test Him at any point and you discover that His will is responsive to the will of God. This is more than daily food. "My meat," He said, "is to do the will of him that sent me." Here He found His freedom and His joy; for freedom does not consist in release from all restraint. Freedom consists in harmonious adjustment to that which has the superior right to our strength or service.

Here again our modern life needs just this simple return to the mind of Christ. Religion roots in the fact of God and in the will of man responsive to the will of God. When the sense of responsibility and dependence is clear and strong, then religion takes on vigor and beauty. The soul's answer to the will of God

must be clear and constant if it is to find the peace that passeth understanding and the power which rests in no mortal sense or gift or grace.

The second reality in the consciousness of Jesus was the way in which He regarded the world as the creation of the good God and man as the child of the heavenly Father.

At first thought it might seem as if this were not so important a factor in the life of a person that it ought to be given such supremacy. The more we study our own hearts and the closer we come in contact with the action of others, the more clearly we perceive that at last it is the view of the world that governs us in all that we do.

In the first paragraph of his book on "Pragmatism," Professor James quotes Mr. Chesterton, and agrees with him, in the statement that the most important item in regard to a person is his ideal or his view of the world. A prudent landlady may think it is necessary to know the resources of a prospective boarder before she risks admitting him to her table and home. This is necessary; but it is still more necessary that she should know the ideal of her boarder, for finally the payment of his board bill will rest upon the view of the world that he holds. So, at the last analysis, it is the ideal value that determines life. What we think of the world determines what we do in the world. We may fail or

our success may be long deferred; but at last the ideal conception of the world and our relation to it enters into and determines all that we do.

Let us not think that it is so easy to come to clear definition with ourselves concerning the meaning of life. Of course, if a man only drifts with the tide and takes all along the line of least resistance, then there will be no serious engagement with this problem, which lies so deep under all our human thinking and action. If, however, a man is really seeking the truth and trying to find out a final warrant for his action, he will soon discover that the utmost resources of his reason and judgment are put to the test when he grapples with the question as to what the world really means. Is there a personal will behind it? What account can be given for the fact of sin and death? Why do good purposes fail and why do trials come to the undeserving?

Set out in your own most earnest thinking to answer these and a thousand other questions that come up every day, and you are soon at the end of your scant line.

I have no valuation to put upon life except the one that Jesus put upon it. He met every experience of my mortal life and He met them all in their most intense expression. Through it all He held stedfastly to the conception of the world as the creation of the good God and saw working through it the

divine purpose of love. He saw the fact of human sin, and neither denied its reality or set at naught the love of God in permitting it. He rebuked it and opposed it, and never did He once believe that wrong would triumph.

It may be that we feel the confusion and uncertainty. The meaning of the world seems very dark. I know of only one way in which to find the light of truth on this problem. Let this mind be in you which was also in Jesus. Accept His estimate of the world. See life as He saw it. Trust the better purpose in it as He trusted it.

If religion consists in a relationship between the soul and God, it is completed only when that relationship is extended to the world in which one lives. Religion has both its heavenly and its human aspects, and each is incomplete without the other.

The sweetness and power of the life of Jesus consists largely in the closeness and tenderness of the relation that He bore to that world which He conceived as the creation of the good God and which He made the area in which the will of God was to be done among men.

Jesus did not shun the closest and sometimes the most disagreeable of human relationships; on the contrary, He bound Himself to men in the close bond of service and sacrifice.

Jesus used all the gifts of life wisely. We all enjoy life or we wish to do so. The old idea of shunning or abjuring that which is not in the very nature of it evil, is a doctrine that is not given place any more in modern life. That is, we do not measure the worth of our life by the small number of relationships that we bear to the world in which we live, but by the number and the intimacy of those relationships. The great problem of self-mastery is essentially this: how to use the gifts of life without abusing them, and how to enter into the fullest experience of the world and possess it without suffering it to possess us or overthrow us. The only solution of this problem that ever has been offered is the one afforded by the consciousness of Jesus. To meet the world as He met it is to conquer it and to master our own lives. We do not need to be afraid of the world if we are only undertaking to live in the midst of it as Jesus lived.

Jesus met the duties of life helpfully. The most concise biography of the Master and the one that probably appeals most thoroughly to us is the simple statement: He went about doing good. His life was a ministry of help and courage to all those who needed His word and deed. He kept clear the everlasting moral distinctions and He flogged the intruder from the temple of God; but there was no appeal for help and there was no call of penitence

that He did not hear and answer. The benediction of His daily life was the gift that He had to bestow upon His generation; and He gave Himself without stint or refusal to every need that came to Him from every heart that was genuine and honest. He dared to smite the sham with words that burn with fire; but He could be tender as a mother with the soul that sought to be forgiven.

There is no other solution to the problem of the right use of our life than this which the life of Jesus offers. When we are confused about duty there can be no danger in this principle: Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. To live as He lived will be the solution of our problems, and will release us into the joy and peace of a life that is right with God and with men.

What is it, therefore, to follow Christ? To imitate the manner of His daily life surely can not be enough. We are not required to repeat His deeds as a child would follow a copy. To feel the kindling of our imagination as we brood upon His life is not enough. Emotion must pass into action ere we can follow the Lord. To believe certain doctrines about His person and His work in the world is not enough. The mental conviction must pass into the deed that is inspired by it, or we do not truly follow Christ.

The secret of following the Master depends upon the way we master His mind. When

our consciousness of God and of the world becomes saturated with His, and when we act steadily and gladly from His motive, then we are following Christ. It is to come into those great relations toward God and the world in which He stood; it is to set the same value upon ourselves and our fellow men that He set; it is to be mastered by the spirit and the mind of the Master Himself.

We fail and we falter and we do not satisfy either our own demands or those of our friends. None but God knows our hearts fully. He sees and He judges. Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind and then let him live his own life. We shall never go astray if we follow the text, Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.

DAVISON

THE TREASURE-HOUSE OF THE KINGDOM

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THE TREASURE-HOUSE OF THE KINGDOM

Prin. W. T. Davison, D.D.

"And he said unto them, Therefore every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."—Matt. 13 : 52.

We can not be sure of the exact scope of the figure employed in our text. Is this householder providing food for the multitude, various provision for various needs, "all manner of precious fruits, new and old" (Song 7 : 13), new confections and old wine—that is far better than the crude must of yesterday? Or is he, as is common in the East, unfolding the resources of a rich wardrobe, so many changes of raiment, brand-new fabrics of latest style, old laces and gold-embroidered garments possessing dignity and historic interest? Or rather, jewels and furniture of diverse history and value, heirlooms from a distant past, bright new ornaments, carved chests from the stores of ancient kings? It matters not. We spoil the illustration by narrowing it down to detail; let it stand in its original breadth and generality—he bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old. The application to our own time, a period

in which so much is said of the old faith and the new knowledge, may well prove to be fruitful and instructive.

Every teacher must be first a learner, every real learner ought to become in his own measure a teacher. This is true in all departments of life; we can not teach what we do not know, we can not know without learning by the methods proper to the subject. The learned man is called a scholar because he is content to acknowledge ignorance, to open his mind and sit at the feet of those who are wiser than he. In science we must observe, collect instances, experiment, verify. In metaphysics we analyze, discriminate, reason, confirm. In art students open their eyes and heart to receive lessons of beauty, patiently toil over technical processes, submitting to laws which it is painful to obey in order to communicate delight which it is a joy to impart. The successful manufacturer and the skilled artizan, the craftsman and the laborer of all types, are not exempt from laws which apply to all human acquisitions and achievements.

Not least is this the case in the sphere of religion. Those who carried God's message of old time were men who had been taught of God. The prophet who would speak a word in season to him who is weary must be one who has learned divine lessons, who has been awakened morning by morning to be

taught the highest love. The ready tongue can only be inspired by the willing and waiting heart. The priest who was to help in the work of revealing God to man and bringing man near to God needed long and careful training. The "wise man," who taught in proverbs might be supposed to be educated in society, the possessor of a shrewd eye and a ready wit, but he, more, perhaps, than other teachers, had learned the lesson that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and that the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.

In later times another type of teacher had come to the front, and in the time of Christ he was known as the "scribe." He spent his time in mastering the details of an ecclesiastical code, becoming familiar with traditional precedents and decisions, that he might hand them on and add to their numbers—a doctor, a lawyer, a rabbi, a teacher of the schools. He is not lovely in our eyes. But it must be remembered that he had conscientiously taken much trouble to master what was esteemed the highest knowledge attainable: he had studied, arranged, codified and made the subject his own; he built a hedge round the law and a hedge round that hedge, his whole object being to keep God's commandments inviolate and the name of Him who had given them sacred, as in a very holy of holies.

Then had come One who taught "not as the scribes." His words carried their own weight, were stamped with their own credentials, proclaimed their own authority. None could hear them unmoved and their main teaching was concerning God. The Father was made known by the Son as never before; the truth revealed concerning Him lived, palpitated and glowed in the very utterance; it was brought home with immediate directness to men's business and bosoms; the kingdom of which others had had much to say took on new meaning and character, it was not to come with "observation"—the craning of the neck into the distance to watch for an unimaginable portent — it was in their very midst.

Christ proclaimed a new spiritual order, to attain which there was no need to climb the heaven or cross the sea; men had but to look within and search around them. No new God was declared, yet the new light shed on the nature of Him whom the fathers had known and worshiped gave an altogether new idea of His mind and will, and altogether new conceptions of what was meant by His tabernacling among men and the establishment of His dominion upon earth. The message came, Repent, change both mind and habit from the old hard, selfish, conventional ways; be born again, become as little children with simple, wondering, trustful and obedient

hearts; be baptized, not only with water to cleanse from the evil of the past, but with the Holy Spirit and with fire to purify from within and inform with new celestial energy. Above all, love; love God with heart and mind and soul and strength, love man as man, whether friendly or hostile, generous or ungrateful; so shall new relations between God and men usher in a new heaven and a new earth, a new social organism of renovated spirits, a kingdom whose full coming shall mean that the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven.

Hence arose a new world, of which Christ Himself is the center. "My disciple" is a more frequent phrase with Him than "disciple of the kingdom," but the two mean the same thing. A new sort of scribism, this. You shall learn, He says, not necessarily from books and manuscripts. Not that there is any need to despise a good book, "the precious life-blood of a master-spirit embalmed and treasured up to a life beyond life." You shall learn, not necessarily dogmas of the schools. Not that men should decry healthy doctrine, the best thoughts on the most sacred subjects framed in the best words attainable. You shall learn, not necessarily from carefully compiled ethical codes. Not that any wise man will slight or disregard these precepts of highest sanction and most sacred obligation, the behests of a duty which may

be the "stern daughter of the voice of God," but which also means "the Godhead's most benignant grace."

Doctrines, traditions, laws, principles are inculcated—but alive, not dead; no fossils, but instinct with vital energy. The school of this kingdom is one of spiritual experience; its training is not one of poring over musty tomes, or repeating parrot-like phrases which are only half-understood and wholly uncared for. A man can not enter the kingdom, can not even see it, without a new nature; wise men may miss it, while babes enjoy it. Learn of me, says the Teacher, in simplicity and meekness, throwing aside prejudice, selfishness and hardness of heart, opening wide the doors of affection and trustfulness, gaining fuller insight into the will of God by unfailing obedience to His voice when heard—"if any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." For all is embodied in Him who is the way, the truth and the life. Whoever seeks to embody living truths in abstract propositions—and no true teacher ever does—Jesus Christ does not make disciples thus. He came to be the truth, not simply to declare it. Only the Son can reveal the Father, the nature of the kingdom can only be seen in its King. His are words which are spirit and life, indeed, and in Him is a fountain of redeeming energy enabling men to realize their meaning in action. Learn

of me, says the lowliest of all masters; drink not from the pool, not from the cistern, not from the reservoir, but from the fountain of life indeed.

So the first disciples found it and generations of Christ's followers since. Those who have learned of Him have had placed in their hands a talisman, with its secret watchword, opening up mountain-caves close by their side, rich in treasure, a key to the knowledge of nature, man and God. Jesus said nothing about nature in the modern sense of the word, but the whole world was His, as all our science can not make it ours. He knew man perfectly, the best as well as the worst of human nature; none exposed more sternly than He the evil of hardness and hypocrisy, none more tenderly pitied man's weakness and waywardness, yearning after the lost and giving Himself to the uttermost in order to reclaim them. Christ understood man and nature because He knew God. Others guess and wonder and dream, He knows. Where other religious teachers scatter a few clouds from the lower firmament of the spiritual sky He shoots up a straight shaft of access into the farthest azure, and a vision of glory appears, indeed, such as can never be forgotten or lost. When a "scribe" is made a disciple of this kingdom and knows God and man and nature as Christ makes him, he has found a new world such as eye

sees not, ear hears not, and which can not otherwise enter into the heart of man.

Read the seven parables of this chapter or other chapters. Read the Beatitudes, learn the Lord's Prayer, sit at Jesus' feet to hear His words. Draw still nearer, that you may understand Himself and that kingdom which, because it is His, it must be our first aim to seek and to make our own in His way. Look to Him as Savior, as well as Revealer. Trust Him as He offers on the cross one sacrifice for sins forever, and as He is declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead. Receive His Holy Spirit into the heart and let Him do His work of cleansing, renewing and purifying to the uttermost. Jesus says still to His disciples, Abide in me and I in you; and then, Ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you. If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

"Have ye understood all these things?" It is a searching question. Religiously educated, professing and calling ourselves Christians, taught the catechism as children, having known the Bible all our lives, accepting an orthodox creed and perhaps attending the holy communion—it may still be that in the inner springs of our nature we have not yet been made disciples to the kingdom of heaven. The promise of the parable is only to such.

But all may become disciples if they will; the way is open and the grace is free. The blind from birth may have eyesight given him; the half-cured who see men as trees walking, by an added touch may be enabled clearly to scan the horizon far and near. Those whose eyes have thus been opened will easily follow on to explore.

The abundance of the householder's store is exprest by a notable phrase, "things, new and old." Why is it used? Why does not Jesus say things great and small, things useful and beautiful, things suitable for rich and poor, old and young, wise and simple? The form may be proverbial, or it may be considered generally suitable in describing a storehouse. But it probably contains a deeper significance. Jesus as a teacher had often to face this question of old and new in the realm of truth and to declare what was his attitude to both in a time of transition. The Jews were particularly tenacious of tradition, and in all ages religious people have been naturally conservative. They are usually disturbed, if not alarmed, by the cry, "Thou bringest certain strange things to our ears." It is, therefore, the relation between past and future that is in the mind of the Master when He uses this phrase; the relative claims of venerable, mature experience, on the one hand, and the fresh, vigorous, earnest thought of the moment; on the other the relation of

successive generations to one another, the perennial contest between the *laudator temporis acti,* the tenacious upholder of the customary ideas of the past and the eager young life full of hope and clamorous for the satisfaction of the pressing needs of to-day. Hence our Lord describes the resources of a true disciple of the kingdom as sufficient for all emergencies. The supply in His treasure-house is adequate and abundant, both of things new and old.

How does the doctrine of the kingdom preserve the unity of these two? The arguments of those who plead the claims of either old or new taken separately are well known. Apart from that shallowest and laziest of pleas which obstructs all progress because "what was good enough for our fathers is good enough for us," the better part of human nature is rightly enlisted in defense of truth already assimilated and positions already attained. In religion especially the value of existing grounds of trust causes men rightly to cling to revelations already made and to contend earnestly for the forms in which they have been delivered. Further protection for the sacred truth is afforded by ethical precepts or religious ceremonies; these in turn become sacrosanct, and further doctrine is formulated to secure them in their place. Thus the process of overlaying the original deposit of truth is continued till the

very significance of the original is lost and the Jewish scribes, who most honor the law, make it void through their tradition.

On the other hand, the intellectually restless and eager are represented by the vivacious and versatile Athenians, who "spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing." Novelty may become in itself an excellence, and accepted truth be discarded merely because it is familiar. The paradoxical is considered in itself admirable because it stimulates the intellectually jaded palate. The world of ideas changes for some thinkers like the book of fashions in dress; last season's garb is considered ugly simply because it is no longer worn. For them the stigma of dulness attaches to all that is based on precedent and authority; prejudice is raised against the old, since by its very definition it has had its day, and is fit only to make way for something else.

In true religion each of these tendencies is wrong if it be taken alone. There must be a reasoned relation between the abiding and the transient; no religion can meet the needs of man which does not on the one hand preserve unchanged the eternal principles of right and wrong, both human and divine, and on the other take full account of new conditions, new knowledge, and new requirements, as the generations succeed one another in un-

ending procession. In Christianity the unity between these conflicting elements may always be preserved by men who are made disciples to the kingdom that can not be moved. There may be a removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made; but the things which can not be shaken will remain. These householders bring forth from their treasure things new and old, both equally valuable and easily and harmoniously blended.

Christ Himself furnishes the supreme example of this. We know how, early in His ministry, the objection was raised: "What is this—a new teaching?" How, in the Sermon on the Mount, He said that He came not to destroy but to fulfil; that no jot or tittle of the law should fail till it had been fulfilled. In the brief parable of Luke 5:39, Christ laid stress on the value of the old, as such, and more than once He upheld the judgments of those who spoke from Moses' seat because of the place from which the words were spoken. Yet He protested against pouring new wine into old wine-skins. He superseded that which had been said "to them of old time" by His authoritative word, "I say unto you," for a greater than Jonah, a greater than Solomon, a greater than Moses, is here. Without breaking with the past, He vindicated the rights and the duties of the present; without proclaiming a revolution, He accomplished

one; while upholding the law and the prophets, He showed how the gospel realized and surpassed both. If ever there was a teacher who brought forth for His treasure things new and old, it was He who spoke this parable.

The servant was to be even as his lord. Christ declares here that those who followed Him would be like Him in their blending of old faith and new knowledge. The best-known example is that of the apostle Paul. Who, more completely than he, realized this combination? Brought up as a Pharisee, he never lost his zeal for righteousness. When he preached Christ crucified, it was only that that end should be attained for which the law had striven but had not been strong enough to secure. He pleads continually, "It is written," yet is so convinced of the paramount importance of the message entrusted to him that if an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel than this, he must be anathema. So with the other apostles; from Pentecost onward, they followed their Lord faithfully and closely, but not slavishly. They did not put forth a replica of the Sermon on the Mount, tho echoes of it are found in the epistles of Peter and James. But they were enlightened by the promised Spirit to understand the supreme importance of the person and the work of Christ on earth and its consummation in heaven; and they rightly

put this in the forefront of their message. There were various types of apostolic teaching. The writers of the New Testament do not mechanically copy or imitate one another. The early sermons in the Acts are, in some respects, unlike the teaching that went before and that which followed afterward. Peter, James, John, Stephen, Paul, the writer of Hebrews and of the Apocalypse—how various are these, yet how true, every one of them, to the great central principles of Christ and His kingdom! We need not go beyond the New Testament to find striking illustration of how possible it is for the Christian householder to bring out of the same rich gospel treasure-house things new and old.

The history of Christendom is a running commentary on the same text. What a manifold and complex development has been that of the Christian religion; how difficult it is at this moment to define its essential character, so as to include its almost infinitely various forms and manifestations! There have been periods in its history when a clinging to old and stereotyped forms has endangered the very life of its spirit, as well as periods during which a readiness to change the form of faith has well-nigh caused the substance to disappear. But, on the whole, it has preserved its continuity while spreading into all regions of the world and translating its message into alien climes and other tongues.

The curve described by the development of Christianity may be determined by two foci: belief in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of man, and the historical revelation given in Him; the gift of the Holy Spirit whose work it is to glorify Christ, to take of the things that are His, bring them to remembrance, and so to teach them to the Church that it may assimilate, adapt and apply to new needs the truth, "as truth is in Jesus." The process has not been without its dangers. Serious mistakes have been made, as all must acknowledge except those who consider the Church, as such, to be infallible. But, taking a broad view of Christianity through the centuries, it is remarkable how the two extremes have been avoided. On the one hand, the danger of restricting its development as Islam is fossilized by the dead hand of the Koran; on the other, the snapping of those sacred links of continuity which bind together all who call themselves Christians in loyal allegiance to Him whose name they bear.

Doctrines have changed their form while preserving their substance. It took three centuries to frame the creed of Nicæa, and some important articles of faith, on sin and grace, atonement and justification, were still more gradually wrought out. Some of these, perhaps, need reminting if they are to be made current coin for the circulation of to-day.

The ethical principles laid down in the New Testament are continually receiving new illustration and new applications which may sometimes seem to make the old obsolete. But as Jesus drew from the old law the two great commandments on which He sought to base the conduct of His followers, so the great moral principles of the New Testament, tenaciously held by the Church as beyond change and repeal, are brought freshly to bear upon a perpetually changing civilization. New problems affecting the family, slavery, the position of woman, or international wars, are continually arising, and fresh appeal is continually being made to the disciples of the kingdom for their solution. These do not profess to be able to answer all questions, to remove all difficulties; but it is part of their work in the world to show how those who have learned in Christ's school, can bring the old truth which they assuredly believe, to bear upon hitherto unanticipated problems and practically revolutionized conditions of society.

It is in this way that the kingdom itself is to come among men. For the kingdom is coming, not come; the Church is making, not made. Christendom is, in a sense, a word of the past; its history may be traced out and written down. In a sense, it is a word of the present, representing a mighty living force to-day. Still more is it a word of the

future, for as yet we have not been able to see what "Christianity" fully means. He was right who, in answer to the question, Is the Christian religion "played out"? replied, It has not yet been tried. The disciples of the kingdom are, as yet, far from having exhausted the resources of the treasure-house entrusted to their care.

Ours is an age of transition. Every age forms a bridge between that which precedes and that which follows it, but to our own seems to be entrusted a specially difficult task of assimilating new knowledge, meeting new conditions, abandoning old forms and revivifying old truths. Those on whom such work is specially incumbent need not be discouraged; those who see the process going on around them need not despair. The Christ of the New Testament is for us the Way, the Truth and the Life; not the Christ of the Sermon on the Mount, still less the shadowy personage who is all that remains when certain critics of the Gospels have eliminated from the text whatever does not please them. The Christ of the New Testament, as the Redeemer of men, is the treasure-house, and the Holy Spirit whom He promised enables us to make its contents our own. He is the way-guide into all the truth, new light, that we need for the journey of life. Forms of dogma which have commended themselves to the Church in past centuries may [illegible],

but Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. The gospel of salvation in Him is sufficient for the individual, the nation and the race; it need not be changed, and it can not be given up without darkening the hope of the world. But the task of bringing it to bear with new power upon new generations and new intellectual and social conditions is continually laid upon Christ's Church; it is one of which she must not complain and must not grow weary. In accomplishing it, Christ's disciples fulfil the design of their Master and work out at the same time their own salvation and that of the world whom He came to save.

Spirit, who makest all things new,
Thou leadest onward: we pursue
  The heavenly march sublime.
'Neath thy renewing fire we glow,
And still from strength to strength we go,
  From height to height we climb.

To thee we rise, in thee we rest;
We stay at home, we go in quest,
  Still thou art our abode.
The rapture swells, the wonder grows,
As full on us new life still flows
  From our unchanging God.

DENNEY

THE PRIMARY MARKS OF CHRISTIANITY

JAMES DENNEY

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THE PRIMARY MARKS OF CHRISTIANITY

Prof. James Denney, D.D.

"Where is boasting, then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."—Romans 3 : 27-31.

At first sight this is a difficult and intractable passage. Our minds are hurried abruptly from one question to another, and we fail to see how the questions are connected, or what is their significance when we take them altogether. Readers who are more familiar with the verses which precede than with almost anything in the New Testament, relax their attention unintentionally when they come to the words, "that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." They feel that there they have got to the heart of the matter—the revelation of God in a manner which is at once the vindication of His own character and the hope of sinful men. Their minds rest, and

can not but rest there, and they go over and over the wonderful verses in which Paul interprets for all time the mystery of the cross: Christ Jesus, whom God set forth in propitiatory power, through faith in His blood, with a view to demonstrating His righteousness, that he might be just himself, and justify all who believe in Jesus. But Paul does not himself stop at that point. The sight of Christ on His cross thus interpreted, of Christ a propitiation in his blood, of the Lamb of God bearing the sin of the world, searched and quickened his whole being. We read in one of the gospels, of the men who put Jesus to death, that sitting down they watched him there. So we must conceive Paul's attitude as he writes this passage. He writes with his eye on the Son of God crucified for our sins. His heart is being searched and sounded by the revelation of the cross, and as these swift far-reaching questions rise in quick succession to his lips, we see how he is being moved within. Each of them is prompted by the cross. It is the power of Christ's passion, descending into the apostle's heart and making itself intelligible there, which comes out in them. Each of them is itself a revelation. Each of them implicitly asserts a truth which belongs to the very essence of the Christian faith. All of them together may be said to exhibit the notes of true Christianity as understood by Paul. They may be various, but

they are not incoherent; they are connected by their common relation to the cross; they find their unity and their impulse there.

As Paul contemplates Christ a propitiation in his blood, the first question prompted by the sight is, Where is boasting then? And he answers in a word, Excluded. Standing by Mount Calvary, and realizing that there is no way to God but that way, we become conscious of an infinite obligation to Christ. The deepest, strongest, most omnipresent of all Christian feelings is the feeling of debt. The one thing a man can not do, who has taken home to his heart the significance of the cross, is to make claims as of right against God. He feels that he is debtor to Christ for what he can never repay. Christ has done for him what he could not do for himself, and what no effort could ever enable him to do; He has made atonement for his sins; and as this truth, on which all his hope depends, sinks into his mind and masters it, his soul is flooded with a sense of obligation to Christ in which all other feelings are swallowed up. Boasting is excluded; it is peremptorily and finally excluded; the Christian's whole life is a life of debt to God.

It may seem to some that a truth so obvious is hardly worth stating, either by an apostle or by a modern preacher. But to Paul it was a great revelation, and a stage comes in every serious religious life in which it has to

be learned anew. There is, as Dr. Chalmers said, a "natural legality" in the heart of man which urges him to seek righteousness "as it were of works," instead of submitting to the righteousness of God. Even a Christian lapses half unconsciously into this unchristian attitude; he tries to be good, so to speak, without God; he tries to achieve some character or virtue out of his own resources, and clothes himself in that character or virtue to challenge God's approbation. True, he can only do this when the cross has sunk below his horizon; but it does sometimes sink; and it needs the painful experience of failure to bring him back to it, and to teach him that he must owe the power of the new life to the atonement. What Paul felt with startling force as he looked at Christ crucified, has found expression in every variety of Christian creed. All churches confess with one heart, tho in different forms of speech, that in our spiritual life we begin by being, and must forever continue to be, God's debtors. We can have no relation to him but that of owing him all we are and all we hope to become. Salvation is of the Lord; and the moment we are influenced by any other thought, it ceases to be operative in us. This is what the Lutheran Church means when following in the train of Paul, it teaches that we are justified by faith alone, without works of law. What does that mean, as a religious truth, but

this: that before we have done anything, before we can do anything, nay, in order that we may be able to do anything, the mercy of God is there for us sinners in Jesus Christ; there, before our faces, independent of any action of ours, an inconceivable unmerited mercy, which we can only welcome, and to which we must be indebted forever? This, too, is the Calvinistic doctrine of election. For what does that mean (as a doctrine based on experience) but this: that the initiative of salvation lies with God? that the Master can always say to the disciple, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you? and that the disciple must always say to the Master, Not unto us Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory? The religious import of Calvinism is precisely that of the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith; it is justification by faith exprest in the form of a doctrine of the divine sovereignty. And the same may be said even of what seem to be intellectually poor and unworthy, even degrading and superstitious modes of expressing the truth. The sacramentarianism of the Roman Catholic or of the Anglican Church, which ascribes a peculiar sanctity to sacramental elements, and makes them in themselves vehicles of grace, would never command the influence it does unless it represented, as it were, to the very senses, the truth (for surely it is the truth) that the grace of God is independent

of our deserts, antecedent to our exertions, and that our sole relation to God must be that of being His debtors for it. Lutherans, Calvinists, or Catholics, to call them so—Paul anticipated every particle of the truth enshrined in their characteristic and fundamental doctrines when he exprest the first conviction generated in his heart by the cross in the swift question and answer, Where is boasting then? It is excluded. Humility, as Calvin puts it, is the first, second, and third thing in the Christian religion.

There can be no doubt that this necessity of coming under an infinite obligation to Christ is the great difficulty in the way of the acceptance of Christianity. It is still what it was when Paul preached—the offense or stumbling-block of the cross. It was not the cross itself which was or which is an offense: it was the cross interpreted as Paul interpreted it, the cross a propitiation for sin, the cross requiring men from the very beginning to humble themselves in a way they had never dreamed of, and to owe their very being as children of God, having access to the Father, to what had been done for them by another. Yet this is the test of Christianity. It is not the man who admires Christ, or who essays to imitate Him, or who exalts Him as the measure and standard of perfection, who is the Christian according to the New Testament; it is the man who is debtor to Christ for the for-

giveness of his sins, and for every hope of holiness and impulse to it. Try yourself by that.

Humility is sometimes discredited in the Church because it is misunderstood. It is regarded as an artificial depreciation of one's self in comparison with others. But that has no connection with humility as it is represented here. Humility is simply the recognition of the real relation between ourselves and God. To be humble is to be in one's spirit and temper what we are in point of fact—God's debtors; debtors forever, debtors all the time, to God's redeeming love in Christ. This habit of mind has nothing to do, as is sometimes supposed, with low spirits. It is not characterized by want of hope or inspiration. On the contrary, the most unmistakable indication that the Church lives in the sense of its infinite obligations to Christ is the intensity and fervor of its praise. Boasting is excluded, says Paul; yet did any man ever boast as he? Why, he uses this very word boasting, or words of the same root, over fifty times in his epistles. There is no word he could less afford to dispense with. What he does exclude, or rather what the cross excludes, is that self-confidence in which a man would be independent of God; but when that goes, then room is made for boasting in the Lord. Put the atonement out of the Church's faith, and adoration dies on her lips. You

may have complacent or sentimental hymns; you may have insincere or flattering hymns; you will have no doxologies like those of the New Testament. It is when the sense of what we owe to Christ strikes into our hearts as it struck into the hearts of the apostles that we can say with them, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, . . . to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." That is the beginning of Christianity, and the end of it. It is the exaltation of Christ in the inspiration of what we owe to him.

But as Paul contemplates the cross, another question rises swiftly in his mind. The cross is a revelation of God; it is the final and supreme revelation; for whom is it meant? The question may seem to us almost unreal, but it was a question of fateful importance then. God had had a people peculiarly His own; He had been a God of Jews in a sense in which He had not been the God of other nations. Whatever difficulties we may have in adjusting it to our general conceptions of human history, the fact remains that God had been present in the history of Israel in a manner and to issues to which He had not been present in the history of other races. He had been the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of Moses and the prophets, the God of the pious souls who wrote the Psalms, as He had not been the God of the Gentile

world. This had been in point of fact the method of His dealing with the human race, and whatever problems it may present to our apologetics, it is useless to quarrel with the way God has made and ruled His world. Salvation is of the Jews, let comparative religion say what it will. But God's revelation of Himself to the Jews culminated in the cross, and as Paul looked at it, the truth rose upon his mind that the limitations of the earlier stages of the true religion had passed away. The deliverance from Egypt, the restoration from Babylon, the interpretation of history by Amos and Isaiah and Jeremiah—these might have significance only for the Hebrew race; but Christ on His cross is propitiation for sin. Christ bearing sin, Christ dying in love and dying for righteousness' sake: to whom is that intelligible? to whom does it appeal? To what, rather, let us ask, did it appeal in Paul himself? Was it to the Jew or to the Pharisee? No, it was to the man in Paul that Christ appealed from His cross. It was to the conscience stricken with sin, and doomed to impotence and despair. And as Paul realized this he realized at the same time the great truth which is peculiarly associated with his name—that the gospel is not for a nation, but for all mankind. Is God, the God who reveals Himself at the cross, a God of Jews only? No! there is nothing in the world so universally intelligible

as the cross. Make it visible, and there is not a man on earth who may not know what it means and respond to its power. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself." The second characteristic, then, of the true religion, which will live in the heart of every man who knows what it is, is its universality. The cross appeals to me not in virtue of anything which distinguishes me from others, but in virtue of that in which I am one with every member of the human race. It was the sense of this which made Paul a missionary. I am debtor, he said, not to Christ only, but to Jew and Greek, to wise and unwise. The gospel is not ours; we have no interest in it, and no hope in it, that is not common to the whole family of man. To exclude any section of humanity from it, on any ground whatever, is to disinherit ourselves.

One is tempted to remark in passing that this throws an interesting light on the distinction that is popular in some circles, not to say fashionable, between Paulinism and Christianity. Paul is represented as a person of such abnormal individuality that his interpretation of Christianity must be heavily discounted, or, indeed, completely ignored. It is hardly worth while trying to understand him, let alone feeling under any obligation as far as possible to agree with him. Perhaps it is pleasant to have the consciousness of

superiority to the protest of evangelists and of theologians, but it is surely a case in which to rejoice with trembling. May we not rather say that Paul became the first of missionaries, and established, as he does in this passage, the missionary character of the Christian religion just because he had eliminated from his gospel all that belonged to the Jew or the Pharisee, all that could be characterized as personality or idiosyncrasy, and saw confronting each other and calling to each other, as deep calls unto deep, the infinite love of God in the cross of Jesus, and the hopeless sin and misery of man. Those who contrast Christianity and Paulinism provoke one to say that they understand neither Christ nor Paul. Paulinism will go out of fashion only when sin and grace have ceased to need and to seek each other, and if it does, Christianity will perish with it.

Commonplace as it ought to be—an immediate inference from the fact that the cross appeals directly and exclusively to what is human in man—the truth which is involved in the question, Is He a God of Jews only? is one that is far from commanding practical acceptance in Christendom. It is traversed still, as it was in ancient times, by national pride. It is traversed by that national Pharisaism which disbelieves in the character or in the Christianity of other peoples, and regards them as all, somehow, in the sight of

heaven, less favored races. It is traversed even in the Church itself by the ecclesiastical exclusiveness which would confine the redeeming force of the cross of Christ to the boundaries of some particular organization. It is traversed by all who, on whatever ground, are opposed to the work of Christian missions. Such opponents are not to be found only outside of the Church; they are numerous and sometimes they are audible within. Now no one would assert that all missions have answered the hopes with which they were set on foot, and least of all, would any missionary assert that no mistakes have been made, that no wrong methods have been tried, or that nothing remains to be learned from experience. But that does not touch on the great question, whether God is the God of all, and whether the revelation of God made in Christ the propitiation for sin, is one which is meant for all, which all need, and which all are capable of receiving. When that question is raised, it can only be by those who have the whole significance of the cross yet to discover. The man who has seen what Paul saw, who has felt what Paul felt, dares not limit the range of that divine appeal. He dare not say, This speaks to me, and exerts its power over me; it has meaning and virtue for those who have been brought so far in the life of the soul without its help; but there are races to whom it does not speak, and to

whom it will not speak for generations to come; they must be raised by some other discipline to the level at which in the long run they may see and comprehend and be subdued by the cross. Such a line of argument is not only confuted by all the experiences with which our missionary reports are crowded; it is confuted *ab initio* by the inspired insight of Paul. The discipline of law and of labor is no doubt indispensable in human life, as indispensable within the bounds of Christendom as beyond them. But it is not the discipline of law and of labor which qualifies us to appreciate the gospel; it is the discipline of sin, of failure, of despair. And the gospel comes not to put the finishing touches to a work which has been carried so far in independence of it; it comes to initiate the divine life in the soul. Law and labor can cooperate with it: they can do nothing of consequence without it, and they can not take its place. As long as the cross is visible, God speaks from it to the world in a language that all the world can understand; He proclaims a message from it that all the world needs to hear. Is He a God of Britons only? or of white men only? Who that has bowed down, as Paul did in his soul's great need, and received the atonement, but must answer with him, No! not of Britons only, or of white men only, but of all; the God of Kaffirs and Hindus and Chinamen, exactly as He is our

God; and there is that in every race, underneath the dark skin and the alien traditions, which leaps up as it does in us to the reconciling love of God. That is why we are debtors to all, and have no liberty and no inclination to listen to those who decry mission work. If there is any meaning in the cross, it means that there are no step-children in the family of God. The most superior person must sink or swim with all his kind.

There is another side to this which must not be overlooked. If there are those for whom the gospel as Paul preached it is supposed to be as yet too good, there are those, on the other hand, who are supposed to be too good for the gospel in this particular shape. They do not deny that in some large indefinite sense the world has been indebted to Christ and is indebted to Him still; the leaven has leavened the lump, and in the process they, too, have in a measure been changed; but it is unnecessary, many think, to go further. There is no need, certainly, to disparage this collective impersonal Christianity; we ought to thank God that there is so much of it as there is. But to any one standing where Paul stood, feeling in his own spirit what Paul felt, how inconsiderable a thing it is. Christianity means nothing whatever unless it means the sense of obligation to Christ; but what does this sense of obligation itself mean, when we keep it out of relation to the personal Savior,

and to the divine supernatural deeds on which the hope of the world depends? When we think of the Son of God bearing the sin of the world, can we believe that it will ever be less than the first interest of every man that breathes to know Him, to come under the infinite obligation to Him which constitutes Christianity, to call Him for what He has done Redeemer and Lord? No inheritance of science or philosophy, no advance of art or civilization can ever make the atonement less than essential. There is something in the cross of Christ which strikes deeper into the heart of man than all these elevating and refining powers, and which works miracles in it that none of them can work; and therefore we are debtors to the wise and to the Greek, to that modern intelligence which is often said to be alienated from the gospel, as much as to the barbarians and the uncultured. I believe it is from the cross, as a center, interpreted as Paul interpreted it—from the place at which a supernatural person achieved a supernatural work—that the modern mind, so far as it has been estranged from the New Testament mode of thinking, will be won for that mode of thinking again. The Christian view of all things will be recovered when the soul comes into the Christian relation to Christ bearing the sin of the world. A missionary society naturally thinks of those who have never heard Christ's name;

but it is not they only who need the reconciliation; it is not they only to whom God appeals in His Son; it is not they only for whom Christ died; and if we would do justice to the revelation of the cross, we must make it our calling to carry it not only to what are visibly the dark places of the earth, but to those also that boast of their enlightenment. Is God the God of barbarous races only? Is He not also the God of the races which have produced art and science and philosophy? Yes, He is their God, too; and as their need of reconciliation is the same, it appeals to them on the same terms.

We can not think of this common appeal of the reconciling love of God to all men without distinction without being disappointed with the smallness of the results achieved. The cross has not yet done much, we are tempted to say, to unite the human race. Even Christian nations are at war with each other. If they are not at war, they live in a chronic state of mutual envy, hatred and suspicion, which is morally if not materially as disastrous as war itself. Within a Christian nation there is strife and estrangement of classes; in spite of the all-reconciling symbol which is over them, men are arrayed in opposing camps, which represent hostile interests, and neither love nor trust each other. Nay, the Church itself is rent in pieces by questions of order and organization, and men

unchurch each other over matters like these. The only explanation of such things is that the cross meanwhile has sunk beneath the horizon. If it were visible, if men saw what it meant, this would be impossible. The common relation to the cross would subdue to itself every other relation in human life.

This brings us to Paul's third and last question, Do we make void the law through faith? The question may seem unprovoked, but it was a very real one then, and it resumes its reality as soon as the gospel exerts its power on a great scale. The gospel is a proclamation of the free forgiveness of sins, and the forgiveness of sins is capable both of being misinterpreted and abused. It was misinterpreted and abused in the apostolic age. It was regarded by some people as giving a license to sin with impunity. The enemies of Paul, who affected zeal for righteousness, slanderously insinuated that such was his teaching. He made void the law through faith, they said. In modern language, he abolished morality with his religion. The forgiveness of sins, freely bestowed upon faith, acted as a solvent on morality; the atonement was an opiate to the conscience; the man who accepted it did not take life seriously any more. This problem of the relation of faith and law, religion and morality, pardon and the good life, often comes up anew; there are always people full of moral interest, and es-

pecially of interest in their own morality—their very own—to deprecate the Pauline emphasis on the cross. When the objection was actually made to Paul's gospel that it was unfavorable to morality, that it meant, in plain English, let us do evil that good may come, the more sin the more grace, he denounced it indignantly as a slander. The people who say anything of the kind incur the just judgment of God. There are still people who ought to be answered so. Even here, where it is rather the inevitable consequences of the cross with which he is dealing, Paul repels rather than refutes the idea that faith makes void the law, or that the cross of Christ as he has interpreted it is hostile to morality. The very contrary, he maintains, is the case. "We establish the law." It gets its due for the first time in the lives of Christian men reconciled to God by the blood of the cross. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them, walking as they do, not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

There are many ways in which this can be brought out. It can be proved by looking at what the cross of Christ was, even historically. The cross establishes the law, indicates morality, because it triumphs over the one thing which more persistently and insinuatingly than anything else tends to undermine it. The one undying enemy of Christ, it has been said, is the great God Pan: in other words, it

is the feeling which creeps upon us insensibly that all things are one, and one with a unity in which all differences disappear. Truth and falsehood, right and wrong, nature and spirit, necessity and freedom, the personal and the impersonal, that which we inherit and that which we earn for ourselves—all these are perpetually in process of interpenetration and of transformation into each other. The differences between them are evanescent and unreal, even the difference between right and wrong. And suddenly, in this world of moral haze and uncertainty, where all things are in flux and nothing sure, we come upon the cross, and One hanging on it who died for the difference, and made it as real as His agony and passion, as eternal as the being of God which He revealed. Of all who are interested in morality, the Christian is pledged by the cross to an interest the most passionate and profound. There is a challenge in the very aspect of it. It calls aloud, Who is on the Lord's side? for the Lord has a side. It binds every man who owes allegiance to it to resist, even unto blood, striving against sin.

The falsehood of the suggestion that the Christian religion abolishes morality—or that forgiveness favors sin—is seen more clearly still if we think how forgiveness has just been connected by Paul with Christ as a propitiation for sin. If God's forgiveness meant indulgence if it had no content but this, that

God simply took no notice of sin, no doubt the charge would often be true. But the only forgiveness of which the New Testament speaks is that which is bestowed at the cross; and is there anything there which speaks of indulgence? At the cross of Christ sin is judged as well as pardoned; and the sinner who takes into his heart the Christian forgiveness, the forgiveness preached at the cross, takes into his heart along with it God's annihilating sentence on his sin. Christ bore our sins; that is how they are pardoned; and the virtue of His submission to their doom enters into the Christian along with pardon, so that he is dead to sin. It is because Christ's death has this character, because it is a death in which He is bearing sin that sinners have a point of attachment in Christ, and can become one with Him. If Christ were the holy one of God and we could say no more of Him than that, who could approach Him? Who could dare, to use the language which is so common, to identify himself with Him? But He is the Holy One of God bearing our sin; that is what He is at the cross, and that is our point of contact with Him; it is as He dies in our place, bearing our burden, that He draws us to Himself and unites our life to His own; and the new life that we live in Him is not a life to which law is indifferent; it is a life into which the awful sanctity of the law has en-

tered once for all through the death of Jesus. This is the experience and the gospel of the apostle; and we can understand the indignation with which he repels a charge which virtually meant that Christ had died in vain.

And once more, we can give an experimental proof that religion does not abolish morality; only the forgiven man, it may be boldly maintained, exhibits goodness in its true proportions. The law is only established; that is, it only gets justice done to it when it is written on the heart. But it can not be written on the heart till the heart is made tender, and the heart is not made really tender by anything but that humility which is born in it as it stoops to be forgiven for Christ's sake. It is this which makes it sensitive to all its obligations both to God and man, and not till then does morality get justice in a man's life. The man who is proud of his integrity, and who needs no repentance nor forgiveness, thinks he is fulfilling the law; it does not occur to him that the only fulfilling of the law is love, and that love in Christian proportions and Christian intensity is the response of the soul to what God has done for us in Christ at the cross. We love, with the only love which does justice to the law, with the only love which works righteousness and holiness of truth—we love because He first loved us. And according to the plainest teaching of the New Testament, we do not

know what God's love is until we learn it at the cross, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins." The saint never lived who did not rest his sanctity from beginning to end on the forgiveness of sins. The blood of Christ is no opiate to the conscience; it is a slander so to say, a blind and fatal guiltiness so to think; it is the quickening of the conscience, it is death to sin and life to God.

Such are the thoughts that rise in Paul's mind as he contemplates Christ set forth in his blood, a propitiation for sin. Whatever else they are, they are great thoughts; they are thoughts of that order, the truth of which is seen not in the light we can cast upon them, but in the light which they cast upon everything else. The Christian Church is passing through a hard and perplexing time; not a time of persecution, but one of indifference and even of contempt, in which injustice is easy. There are many who tell us that it is permanently discredited, and that the difficulty felt in almost all the Christian communities of obtaining ministers and missionaries is an unmistakable indication of this. We have heard such things before; they have been often heard in the course of Christian history. The way to meet them and defeat them is not to minimize the gospel, not to reduce it to its lowest terms or to what we

consider such, but to maintain it in the integrity of the apostolic testimony. It is by its greatness it must prevail, by the sense in it of a breadth and length and depth and height passing knowledge. Intelligence may be alienated by the trivial; but great ideas, great truths, great problems, great tasks, always fascinate and subdue it again. We are debtors both to Greeks and barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish; let us preach to them all Christ crucified, the power of God and the wisdom of God; and if we do it with this apostolic comprehension, in the sense of what we owe to God, in the sense of the appeal which His love makes to all without distinction, in the sense, too, of a new obligation to a holy life, we can leave it to God to make it salvation to every one who believes.

DRIVER

THE HEBREW PROPHETS

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THE HEBREW PROPHETS

Prof. S. R. Driver, D.D.

"Attend unto me, O my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation; for a law shall go forth from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the peoples."—Isaiah 51 : 4.

The prophets are at once the most brilliant product of the genius of Israel, and a unique phenomenon in history. The "prophet" is one who speaks on behalf of or for another; this is the sense which the word had among the Greeks, who used it specially of one who interpreted the obscure utterances of a deity; and it is the sense which the word bears in the Old Testament; in the Book of Exodus (7 : 1, 2), for example, Aaron, speaking to the people in Moses' name, is called his "prophet." The prophet is one who speaks for God, comes forward in His name and declares His will or His purpose to His people. The prophets are at one in declaring their firm and unwavering belief that they are the organs and instruments of the Most High, and that their utterances about Him come at His prompting, and are invested with His authority. The phrases which they habitually use are, "Thus saith Jehovah," "Hear ye Jehovah's word." While we can not doubt the inspiration of the prophets, we

must be careful not to think of their inspiration too mechanically. Especially, we must not think of God as dictating to the prophets the very words which they are to use. In all inspiration there are two factors, a human as well as a divine factor. The divine thought, implanted (as we may suppose) by an extraordinary quickening and exaltation of his natural faculties in the prophet's soul, takes there the shape which the prophet's own individuality impresses upon it; he speaks "for" God, but he throws the thought which he expresses into his own words and literary form; the phraseology, the rhetoric, the poetry, the imagery, and also the feelings and the emotions (which are sometimes very palpable) are his own; it is these personal characteristics which impart to the writings of each individual prophet their own distinctive character. And in estimating the writings of the prophets, and comparing them with one another, account must always be taken of this varying human element, which, in a greater or less degree, is invariably present in them.

I may now pass on to illustrate some of the principal ways in which the activity of the prophets displayed itself. And, firstly, notice briefly the part which the prophets played as statesmen. Jehovah was the national God of Israel; Church and State were closely allied; and the truest interests of the one were also the interests of the other. The prophets

possest an insight and independence which fitted them, in an exceptional degree, to be the political advisers of their nation. They saw more clearly than their contemporaries the bearing upon Israel of the movements and tendencies operative about them; they interpreted beforehand the signs of the times, and warned their countrymen how to face the future. In earlier times they are influential in setting up or dethroning dynasties; at a later time they stand beside the king to admonish or advise. Saul, the first king of Israel, was appointed through the instrumentality of a prophet; Samuel saw that the time had come when Israel needed the unifying and consolidating influences which in those days could be wielded only by a monarch; he anointed Saul and instructed him how to act. Jeroboam was encouraged to assume the leadership of the Ten Tribes by the prophet Ahijah. Jehu, again, who overthrew the dynasty of Omri, was anointed at the instance of Elijah and Elisha. But we can study the political action of the prophets more distinctly in the case of those whose writings remain to witness to it. These prophets attack the popular statesmanship of the day; they unmask the fallacies underlying it, and expose its shortsightedness. They also denounce the national sins and shortcomings, showing how they must inevitably end in national disaster. Thus Amos sees society in the northern kingdom, in

spite of the brilliancy and long prosperity of Jeroboam's reign, morally vitiated and corrupt; the nobles of Samaria, so far from evincing anxiety for the public weal, "put far the evil day," and are abandoned to self-indulgence and luxury; he sees only too truly what will happen when the Assyrian draws near; ruin and exile will be his nation's doom. The event proved signally the accuracy of his forecasts. Within sixteen years the inhabitants of the northeastern districts were transported by Tiglath-pileser to Assyria; within thirty years the northern kingdom had ceased to exist.

Isaiah, a little later, displays conspicuously the qualities of a clear-sighted and consistent statesman. The age was one in which the danger that threatened Judah was entanglement with foreign powers; and Isaiah lays down the principles by which her actions should be guided. In the panic caused by the Syro-Ephraitish invasion (Is. 7 : 2) Isaiah alone retained his calmness, and estimated the danger at its just proportions. At that time he discountenanced the application to Assyria for help, for he foresaw the complications that would in all probability result from it; when, however, Ahaz had taken this step and the Assyrian protectorate had been actually accepted by Judah, he acquiesces, and all his efforts are directed toward averting a rupture. From the first he saw the hollowness

of Egyptian promises; again and again he keenly satirizes the folly of trusting to them; and it was doubtless owing chiefly to his influence that the alliance with Egypt was deferred for so many years. In the end, however, in 700 B.C., the party opposed to him prevailed; and Judah, relying upon Egypt and other neighbors, revolted from Assyria. The sequel showed the soundness of Isaiah's judgment. As before, whenever it came to a contest of strength, the help of Egypt was of no avail, and Jerusalem was only saved from destruction by an occurrence which could not have been calculated upon, and which was the termination of a crisis, that, so far as we can judge, would not have arisen at all had Isaiah's counsels been listened to in the first instance.

To pass now to a second aspect of the prophet's work: The prophets were the teachers of a pure and spiritual religion, and of an elevated morality. Their teaching on these subjects has now become so completely part of the common stock of Christian theology and ethics, that we do not always remember how much of it is due, in the first instance, to the initiative. We may be better able to appreciate this if we view them historically. Amos and Hosea, the two earliest prophets whose writings have been preserved to us, lived in the early and middle part of the eighth century B.C.; and when these prophets

wrote, the greater part of the Old Testament was still unwritten; if we bear this fact in mind we shall perhaps be in a better position to realize the originality and creative power of the great prophets. The foundations of Israel's religion had indeed been laid in the distant past. The earlier parts of the historical books, which are the work of men of prophetical spirit, had shown generally that Jehovah was a God of righteousness Himself, who loved righteousness in men; and history had produced many examples of men who had striven to rule their lives accordingly; but the great prophets who followed developed both theology and ethics in many directions, and gave them new and important practical applications. Nathan, we remember, rebuked David fearlessly for his great sin. Elijah was the champion alike of religion and morality; he fought, and fought successfully, the great battle of Jehovah against Baal; and he pronounced sentence upon Ahab and Jezebel for the mock trial and murder of Naboth.

When we come to the prophets whose writings have been preserved to us, we find that, while, of course, there are many fundamental truths, which are proclaimed by all alike, there is mostly some particular principle upon which each lays stress. Amos, for instance, the first of these prophets, shows remarkable originality and breadth of view. He opens his book with a survey of the nations around

Israel; and fastening upon some offense against common humanity of which each has been guilty, declares the judgment impending upon it. But he does not end there; Israel and Judah are included in his count, "because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for the sake of a pair of shoes." He thus transcends the limits of Jewish particularism; he teaches the impartiality with which Jehovah views all nations, and shows, in opposition to what was the current belief at the time, that He demands of Israel, His chosen and privileged people, precisely the same standard of equity and right which He exacts of other nations. Hosea, the prophet of religious emotion, lays stress upon the love with which Jehovah regards Israel; and while reproaching Israel for the imperfect manner in which His love was requited by it, deduces the lesson that the individual Israelite who seeks to participate in God's love must show love, on his own part, to his brother man. Isaiah is filled with the sense of the majesty of Israel's God; alike in nature and in history he sees Jehovah reveal Himself in grandeur; the whole earth is full of His glory; and his description of Jehovah seated upon His heavenly throne, or of the "day" on which He will manifest Himself against all that is "proud and lofty," or the imposing imagery under which he represents Him as striking down the hosts of Assyria (Is. 30 : 27-32), are sufficient

evidence how fitted his genius was to conceive and express this aspect of the divine nature. The author of the discourses of Deuteronomy, who was a prophet intermediate in time between Isaiah and Jeremiah, and who in some respects developed the teaching of Hosea, insists with that warmth and persuasive eloquence which is peculiarly his own upon the sole divinity of Jehovah, as opposed to the inroads which heathenism was at the time making into Judah; He insists that Jehovah is the only God, a pure and spiritual being, who has loved Israel and is worthy to receive Israel's undivided love in return; Israel is to be a holy nation; its members are never to forget that they are the servants of a holy and loving God, and love is to be the guiding principle of their conduct, whether toward God or man. Jeremiah deplores the abandonment of Jehovah by His people for "other gods," and seeks to recall Judah to a sense of the claims which Jehovah has upon its reverence and love. The great prophet of the Exile, the author of chapters 40-66 of Isaiah, when his contemporaries doubted Jehovah's power to bring home His people from Babylon, preaches in language more exalted and impressive than is to be found in any other part of the Bible the transcendence, the omnipotence, the infinitude of Israel's God, the first and the last, the creator and sustainer of the universe, the incomparable One, who

stands nevertheless in intimate relation with the earth, whose throne is indeed the heavens, but who dwells also with the humble and contrite heart; who has, moreover, His purposes of salvation, which, tho they are directed with special affection toward Israel, comprehend within their ultimate scope all the kindreds of the earth. Isaiah can depict, in unrivaled imagery, the majesty of Jehovah; but the great prophet of the Exile stands alone in the splendid comprehensiveness with which he proclaims the immensity of the divine nature and the boundlessness of its operation. And so we see how each prophet dwells upon and develops some particular aspect of truth, partly such as his own character and genius were adapted to apprehend, partly such as was fitted to meet the needs of the age in which he wrote.

Ethically, the prophets play largely the rôle of what we should call social reformers. They attack the abuses always conspicuous in an Eastern aristocracy; they assert with an earnestness and eloquence, which can never lose their spell, the claims of honesty, justice, philanthropy, and mercy. Certainly, the most ancient Hebrew legislation known to us, the Decalog and the Book of the Covenant (Ex. 20 : 23) fully recognize such claims. But the prophets develop and apply to new situations the principles implied in the old legislation, and reaffirm them with fresh energy.

Listen thus to Amos: "Forasmuch, therefore, as ye trample upon the poor, and take exactions from him of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink the wine thereof" (Amos 5 : 11). "Seek good and not evil, that ye may live; and so Jehovah, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye say. Hate the evil and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate"—the place where justice was administered—"it may be that Jehovah, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph" (Amos 5 : 14, 15). Micah and other prophets speak similarly: Isaiah, for instance (ch. 5), inveighs at length against the sins of a selfish and debased aristocracy, and shows how they were working their natural effects by disintegrating and weakening the national character. Nor must I omit to notice here the wonderful spiritualization of (chiefly) the old legislation of the "Book of the Covenant" in Deuteronomy, in which civil and ceremonial statutes are made the expression of a great and moral and spiritual ideal, which is designed to comprehend and govern the entire life of the community.

The prophets are again the warm and earnest advocates of a spiritual service of God. The Jews were too often apt to become formalists in their religious observances: they thought that if they were sufficiently frequent

in their attendance at the temple, and in offering sacrifices, it was of little moment what their conduct in other respects might be; they were secure of Jehovah's favor. The prophets, on the contrary, teach that God requires the service of the heart. Of their memorable declarations on this subject, I can now only remind you of two. Amos, addressing the Israelites who thronged the great sanctuary at Bethel, and maintained there a splendid ceremonial, cries out, in Jehovah's name: "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, tho ye offer me your burnt offerings and meal offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy lyres. But let judgment roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (Amos 5 : 21-24). And so, again, in the dark days of Manasseh, when heathen rites made their way into Judah, and it was asked by many what offerings might be of sufficient value to propitiate the Deity:

Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah,
And bow myself before the high God?
Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings,
With calves of a year old?
Will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams,
Or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my first-born for my transgression,
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

Micah answers by setting forth an ideal of religion which has never been surpassed:

> He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good:
> And what doth Jehovah require of thee,
> But to do justly, and to love mercy,
> And to walk humbly with thy God?
> (Micah 6 : 6-8).

As their writings sufficiently show, the prophets were primarily the teachers of their own generation. It is the political mistakes, the social abuses, the religious and moral shortcomings of their own age which they set themselves to correct. It was their own contemporaries whom they sought in the first instance to recall to a high ideal of faith and practise. To be sure, they assert principles of universal validity, and capable, therefore, of application in new and altered circumstances; but the special forms which these principles assume in their hands show that the aim which they had in view is to meet the needs of their own time. Prophecy subserved moral purposes; and its primary motive was the practical guidance, in life and thought, of those among whom the prophet lived. This fact affords us a criterion for estimating the temporal predictions of the prophets. The prophets unquestionably possest the gift of uttering temporal predictions, which were truly fulfilled, in accordance with their expectations; but these predictions relate to the

immediate or proximate future; and they are given for the warning or encouragement of the people, as the case may be, in the particular circumstances in which they are situated at the time; they stand consequently in a direct relation to the age in which the prophets themselves lived.

I have already noticed how Amos' predictions of the end of the northern kingdom were fulfilled. I can now only notice besides the brilliant series of predictions in which Isaiah foretold alike the siege of Jerusalem and the fate of the besiegers. All, so far as we can see, was calm on the political horizon, when, in the summer of B.C. 702, Isaiah amazed the people of Jerusalem by this startling announcement: "Ah! Ariel, Ariel, the city where David encamped, add ye a year to the [current] year; let the feasts run their round; then will I distress Ariel, and there shall be mourning and lamentation. And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a fort, and I will raise siege works against thee. . . . But the multitude of thy foes shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones as the chaff that passeth away; yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly" (Isaiah 29 : 1-5). The people only stared at the prophet in blank incredulity (ver. 9, R. V. margin). But the event showed that he had seen truly. Next year, Judah and many of its neighbors re-

volted from the Assyrians; Sennacherib started to quell the rebellion; and as he drew nearer and nearer to Jerusalem, Isaiah accompanied his movements with a whole series of prophecies, all describing, under varying imagery, a sudden and mysterious disaster which would disperse his forces and release Judah from her peril. Thus, in chapter 10, he imagines Sennacherib drawing nearer and nearer to Jerusalem from the north, until at last at Nob, a height about a mile north of the city, he swings his hand audaciously at the temple hill; the prize seems already within his grasp; when his army, figured as a huge forest, is mown down suddenly by an unseen hand: "Behold! the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, will lop the boughs with terror: and the high ones of stature will be hewn down, and the lofty will be brought low, and he will strike down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon will fall by a mighty one" (Is. 10 : 33, 34). And a little later, perhaps when the troops of Sennacherib were massing close at hand in the Philistine territory, he paints the splendid scene: "The nations make an uproar like the roaring of many waters, but he will rebuke them, and they shall flee far off; and they shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like the whirling dust before the storm. At eventide behold confusion; before the morning, he is not" (Is. 17 : 13, 14).

And still later, when to human eyes it must have seemed that the toils had finally closed about the city: "At the noise of the tumult the peoples are fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations are scattered" (Is. 33 : 3). And, as we know from the historical books, the army of Sennacherib was, in fact, when the doom of the city was to all appearance sealed, cut off unexpectedly by what must in reality have been a pestilence, while pressing on into Egypt. It would not be difficult to adduce other examples of the remarkable prevision possest by the prophets; but I must pass on.

Already, however, even in the few quotations which I have given, we may observe a fact which is worthy of our attention. The prophets are nearly always poets; hence, tho they no doubt utter sometimes matter-of-fact predictions, they very frequently clothe the thought which they have to express in an imaginative dress, or develop it with poetic imagery; and this imaginative element in their predictions has often nothing corresponding to it in the fulfilment. Thus Isaiah pictures Sennacherib approaching Jerusalem from the north, and having his army suddenly cut off at Nob; but in point of fact, neither of these things happened; he sent Rabshakeh against Jerusalem from Lachish in the southwest, and his army perished in or near Egypt. The essence of Isaiah's proph-

ecy is fulfilled; but not the particular form in which its essential idea is exprest. Similarly in chapter 30: the great storm by which he pictures the Assyrian army as dispersed, and the huge funeral pyre which he imagines prepared to receive the Assyrian king and his army, are but poetical figures under which he depicts the completeness of the Assyrians' ruin; nothing corresponded to them in the fulfilment. We have thus a warning against interpreting the imagery of the prophets too literally.

The last characteristic of the prophets to which I shall be able to refer—their anticipation of an ideal future, of a time when the kingdom of God, unmarred by the presence of sin or trouble, will be established upon earth (or in the broader sense of the expression) of the Messianic age. The representations of this ideal future are poetically conceived, and hence vary often in details; but there are few prophets in whose writings, in one form or another, they do not form a characteristic feature. Thus Hosea closes his prophecy with a beautiful picture of Israel penitent, flourishing and spreading like a fruitful vine under the protecting favor of its God. Isaiah, after his impressive description of the "day" of Jehovah, sweeping away from Judah every object of pride and delight, and leaving the city desolate and empty, goes on abruptly to hold out before his hearers a

vision of the new glory which is to follow (Chap. 4): "In that day shall the growth of Jehovah be for beauty and for glory, and the fruit of the land for majesty and adornment, unto the escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion and that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy, even every one that is written down for life in Jerusalem" (Is. 4 : 2, 3). The picture is that of a remnant that will survive the judgment, and under changed and brighter auspices form the nucleus of an ideal community in the future. A new glory and ornament will appear, and take the place of that which has been swept away. The very growth of the land, for those that escape, fostered by Jehovah's care, will be clad with preternatural splendor. The inhabitants of Zion will realize the ideal character of the nation; every one of the survivors, "written down for life in Jerusalem"—*i.e.*, inscribed in the register of its living citizens—shall be called "holy" (Ex. 19 : 6). By "life" Isaiah means not life hereafter, but life on earth under new conditions; a glorified life freed from sin and trouble. The community is, moreover, not merely purified morally, provision is also made for its continued safety. It is defended by the protecting presence of Jehovah, described, in imagery suggested by the story of the Exodus, as "a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night";

a pavilion, or canopy, spread out over the whole site of Zion, will shelter it both from the sultry heat and from the violent storms to which an Eastern climate is always exposed. This is a single picture; but it is typical of many which appear in Isaiah, as also in other prophets. What the prophets love to depict, after the troubles of the present are over, is the advent of an age in which the unworthy members of a community having been removed, the survivors, purified and regenerate, realize the ideal holiness of the nation, and inspired by feelings of gratitude and devotion, live a life of ideal felicity in their own land.

A frequent but not a constant figure in these ideal pictures of the future is the ideal king, commonly known as the Messiah (*i.e.*, the "anointed one"—a term based on the expression "Jehovah's anointed," often used in the Old Testament of the Israelitish king). David and Solomon had both left brilliant memories behind them; for centuries the monarchy had been the center and pivot of the State; and so the prophets, especially Isaiah, conceived the portrait of an ideal king, who, in contrast to the imperfect rulers of their own day, would realize the highest possibilities of earthly monarchy, sitting on the throne of David, governing Israel with perfect justice and perfect wisdom, and securing for his subjects perfect peace. As Isaiah had

drawn the picture of the ideal king, so the author of Isaiah 40 : 66 draws a picture of the personified genius of the nation—Jehovah's "servant," as he is termed. Israel was the prophetic nation; it had received in the past the call to be the witness to God upon earth, and the organ and channel of revelation, but it had only imperfectly fulfilled its destiny; and so, upon the basis of the actual but imperfect Israel, the prophet rises to the conception of the ideal Israel, the Israel true to its destiny; and so vivid is the personification that the figure assumes, in his hands, the features and form of an individual who exhibits in their perfection the typical excellences of the nation, and may, therefore, be not unsuitably described as the personified genius of Israel. In virtue of his prophetic office Jehovah's "servant" has a mission, not to Israel only, but to the world (Is. 49 : 6); in pursuing his course, he meets contumely, persecution, and even death; but being innocent himself, his sufferings are efficacious for the good of others; finally, as the reward for his obedience, amazing greatness, such as even kings will marvel at (Is. 52 : 14) is in store for him afterward. The character is a wonderful one: it is instinct with singular sweetness, sympathy and tenderness; it is drawn by the prophet with great completeness; and it is introduced by him into his discourse with surprizing dramatic force.

There is one more feature in the prophets' outlook into the future to which I must refer, and that is their catholicity. They look forward to the time when the Gentiles will be admitted to the religious privileges of the chosen people. In the striking prophecy with which his second chapter opens, Isaiah poetically imagines the temple hill elevated so that it may be conspicuous afar, and then he pictures the nations streaming to it as to their spiritual metropolis, eager to listen to the divine instruction proceeding from it; and afterward he views in succession Ethiopia, Egypt, Tyre, and even Assyria, doing homage in the future to Israel's God. Jehovah's servant, of whom I have just spoken, is also commissioned to proclaim the truth possest by Israel to the world: he is equipped as a prophet, with God's spirit resting upon him; and his work is to "bring forth judgment [*i.e.*, religion] to the nations"; to adopt the fine figure of another passage, he is to be a "light of the Gentiles" (Is. 42 : 1, 6). It is the same prophet who declares that the temple is to be a "house of prayer for all nations" (Is. 56 : 7).

These ideals form a striking and most characteristic feature in the writings of the prophets, and the question arises, How are they to be interpreted? What is to be said about their fulfilment? A careful comparison of the prophecies between themselves and with

history shows that in interpreting them there are certain principles which must be remembered, if we are to avoid error. There is, of course, no question that the two great ideals I have spoken of, the ideal king and the personified genius of the nation, were fulfilled in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. The two ideals which in the Old Testament are always distinct, were in the end fulfilled in union in Him. On the one hand, He is the king, the prince of peace, whose rule over the hearts of men is prefigured by Isaiah in his wonderful picture of the just and perfect administration of the shoot out of the stock of Jesse. On the other hand, as teacher, prophet, example, and sacrifice, He exhibited in their completeness the character which had before been imperfectly realized, whether by individual Israelites, or by the nation collectively: He thus corresponded precisely to the figure which I have called the personified genius of the nation, portrayed by the second Isaiah. But even here, if we look carefully, we shall see exemplified some of those principles of interpretation of prophecy to which I have alluded. In the first place, as I have said before, the prophets were preeminently poets; as poets, and especially as Oriental poets, they are endowed with imagination; they project bold ideals; they paint the future in brilliant colors; but we must beware of looking at details too narrowly, or expecting

the fulfilment to be too literal. Secondly, they were seldom able to emancipate themselves entirely from the local and temporal limitations of the age in which they lived; and thirdly, they generally believed that the immediate future would see their ideals realized. Now, it is doubtful if any of their ideals have been realized in the precise form in which they themselves pictured them. Christ did not, and does not, sit upon a literal throne of David, or reign in the actual city of Jerusalem; still less did He, as Micah expressly says that the ideal ruler of Israel would do (Mic. 5 : 6), ward off the Assyrian when he invaded their territory; when Christ was born the Assyrian empire had long ceased to be. But, in fact, the kingdom of the prophets is in the fulfilment transformed: the glorified earthly kingdom, with a visible center at Zion, has given place to a spiritual "kingdom of heaven," with no local center; and spiritual blessings take the place of the material benefits to be conferred by the rule of Isaiah's or Micah's ideal king.

So, again, it is clear that the prophets greatly foreshorten the future. Under the strain and anxiety of a great national crisis, they idealize the age which is to begin when it is past; they picture it as marked by the reign of goodness and felicity. We have seen one of Isaiah's visions of this golden future. The great prophet of the Exile pictures in

even more dazzling colors the splendor of the restored Jerusalem, the perfections of its inhabitants; the profound impression that it would make upon the world, the deference and respect which would be paid to it by all nations. But neither of these visions was realized as the prophet saw it. Jerusalem was, indeed, delivered from the Assyrian, and the exiles did return to Palestine; thus far both prophets foretold truly, but no great national reformation, no great national exaltation, followed either one event or the other. The prophets did not realize the complexity of human nature, or the force of evil habit upon it; they did not perceive how gradual all moral change must be; they did not understand what centuries must elapse, and what new and varied influences must be brought to bear upon human character, before the conditions of a perfect social state could be even approximately satisfied.

Their visions are great ones; no more ennobling and inspiring ideals of the possibilities of human life, or of the destinies of human society, are to be found in all literature. But they must be read and interpreted as ideals. The imaginative garb in which the prophets set forth the future must be recognized; it must be recognized that they are largely not predictions of fact, and that in the form in which they are set forth they contain many details which have not been realized in the

past, and can not be realized in the future. I say can not be realized in the future, because the circumstances under which alone their realization was possible have passed away and can not be reproduced. Whatever the future course of history may be, it is contrary to the fundamental teaching of the New Testament to suppose, for instance, that Israel should ever become the priestly caste, with the Gentiles standing toward it in the subordinate position of laity, or that Jerusalem should become the actual and visible religious center of the world, to be visited, week by week, and month by month, by pilgrims from all nations, to observe the Jewish feasts of the Sabbath and the new moon (Is. 59 : 6; 66 : 23; *cf.* Zech. 14 : 16, 17). But the most catholic of the prophets are unable entirely to rise above the national and religious limitations of their age, or to avoid conceiving the future under the time-honored forms of their own dispensation.

When, however, due allowance has been made for the imaginative language employed often by the prophets, and for the national and temporal limitations which thus cling to them, their visions of the future are seen to be vivid and true expressions of the real purposes of God toward man. When, to the great majority of those who were to witness it, the return of a few thousand Jews to Palestine must have seemed an event of abso-

lute indifference, the prophet of the Exile affirmed that it was fraught with the world-wide consequences for the spiritual future of mankind. Again, the event showed that he saw truly. The return to Palestine prevented the Jews from being lost among the nations, as their brethren of the ten tribes had been lost. Israel returned, and resumed its national life and organization; and so, when the fulness of time had come, the transformation of the old Jewish religion into a form adapted for other nations was found to be possible, and the faith of Christ was diffused among the Gentiles by the agency of the apostles. The consummation to which the prophets had often pointed was thus inaugurated; and the words of the passage which I have chosen for my text, as marking one of the culminating points of Old Testament prophecy, were fulfilled: Jehovah's "teaching" had gone forth, and He had made His "judgment"—*i.e.* His religion—"to rest for a light of the peoples."

DRUMMOND

THINGS UNSEEN AND ETERNAL

JAMES DRUMMOND

Formerly principal of Manchester College, Oxford; born in Dublin, May 14, 1835; educated in Dublin; entered Trinity College, Dublin, in 1851; graduated in 1855, obtaining the first gold medal in classics; in 1856, entered Manchester College, London, as a divinity student; during his first term won a Hibbert scholarship; in 1859 his health gave way, and he had to leave college before the completion of his course; in 1859 was invited to become the colleague of the Rev. William Gaskell at Cross Street chapel, Manchester, and at the end of 1859 settled in Manchester; was invited, in 1869, to succeed the Rev. John James Tayler as professor of New Testament and divinity in Manchester College, London, and began work there in January, 1870, Dr. James Martineau being the principal; succeeded Dr. Martineau as principal in 1885; in 1889 the college was removed to Oxford; retired in 1906; author of "The Jewish Messiah," "Philo Judaeus," "The Hibbert Lectures on Christianity," "The Life and Letters of James Martineau" (written in conjunction with Professor Upton), "The Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel," "Studies in Christian Doctrine," etc.

THINGS UNSEEN AND ETERNAL

The Rev. James Drummond, M.A., Litt.D.

'We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.''—2 Cor. 4 : 18.

Those who, like Paul, consecrate their lives, or any considerable portion of their lives, to the spiritual service of mankind, can sustain their strength only by the revelations of faith. If you can convince them that what they see with the bodily eyes exhausts the universe, and thus blot out their ideal vision, they will, as prudent men, turn from the pursuit of dreams, and try to make the best of the hard realities of life. Their afflictions will no longer appear to them light and momentary while measured against the vast sweep of eternity and the gravitation of the soul toward that central glory which only the eye of the soul can see, but will now press upon them with a dead weight, and seem to block up the whole of the discoverable future. It will be better for them to sink back into the world's beaten ways, and, making the best of its transient comforts, fret themselves no more about such fantoms as justice, holiness, truth, and beauty. But happily for mankind, there are always some in whom the

vision is too clear for skepticism, and the attraction of the soul to the ideal and divine is too strong to be resisted. To them it is the so-called hard realities that are unreal, except so far as they catch a reflected reality from that which is above them and unseen. The light that glitters with swift and changeful dance upon the wave is but a reflection from the stedfast sun; and so the events that move before our eyes, and make up the flitting experiences of life, are tokens of something permanent behind, and whenever we place our trust in them they break at our feet and warn us that that which abides must be sought elsewhere.

From the different modes of contemplating the universe suggested by these remarks, two distinct types of character arise, which we may call the worldly and the spiritual. In most of us, indeed, these two are mingled together, and neither epithet might seem applicable to our case; but sometimes one or other becomes so predominant as to obscure the pretensions of its rival, and exhibit its own nature without disguise; and in all, I presume, there is a prevailing tendency in one direction, and we are either becoming more attached to the world of sense, and allowing it a less disputed control over our thoughts and purposes, or we are slowly breaking its fetters, and committing ourselves with less reserve to the leading of things

which eye has not seen nor ear heard. In the former case there is a gradual hardening and debasing of the character. All the conventional requirements of society may receive their due recognition as a necessary part of this plan of life; but there is less and less response to whatever appeals to the higher sentiments, there is a growing disinclination to sacrifice ease and comfort to the demands of duty and benevolence, regard for the supposed opinion of the world supersedes the secret voice of conscience, and, if the being of God is not theoretically denied, He is, at all events, little more than the spectral remnant of an inherited creed. In the latter case, this process is reversed, and the character ascends toward a nobler simplicity, and severe yet sweet purity and faithfulness. Every legitimate claim of society is frankly acknowledged, and yet he who worships in the sanctuary of duty calmly puts aside both the threats and the applause of men. His life is shaped by ideal ends, and he measures the things of earth by ideal standards. As to the eye of science this huge globe dwindles into a tiny atom swimming in the measureless ocean of space, so to the eye of faith this life, so long and brilliant in the youthful fancy, so big with trouble and disappointment in the mature experience, condenses into a moment in the solemn eternity, and all its grand projects are tested by their relations

to this vast surrounding. The spiritual man recognizes God as an abiding presence, not only as one of whom others have told him, but as one who has Himself spoken and still speaks within; and his dominant aim in life is not to win some poor bauble which may at any moment be shattered by death, but to reach a perfect communion with the infinite source of being, a communion which is superior to the accidents of time, and can look forward to death as the rending of a veil and an admission to the holy of holies.

But lest it should be said that the spiritual character is all very well for the age of monks, or for the few at the present time who can beguile their lives in seclusion from the world's rough ways, but is not suited to a state of society in which food and shelter must be found amid an eager competition, and the weak and the dreamers must go to the wall, we must observe that, tho the lower character is incompatible with the higher, nevertheless the higher includes within itself all that is really valuable in the lower. The spiritual man need not withdraw himself from the world's affairs, or even decline the world's honors and advantages; but instead of allowing them to rule him and become ends in themselves, he will insist upon ruling them, and make them subservient to lofty purposes. The worldly character is not in our surroundings, but in ourselves. The

world itself is the divine field where our duties are to be performed, our temptations fought, and righteousness and truth to be won. Nor let any one suppose that there is a loss of practical skill or of clear prudential sight through the elevation of our aims. On the contrary, religion, while purifying, at the same time intensifies the action of all our mental faculties, and it is under the religious impulse that our powers attain their widest compass and their highest exaltation. All the movements by which the welfare of society is advanced would proceed with greatly augmented efficiency if they were relieved from the rot of selfishness and fraud, and the divine ideas of duty, justice, and beneficence held the scepter over our politics and our commerce. The individual, indeed, may often have to choose between righteousness and prosperity, and see other men rushing past him in the career of outward success and distinction. But should this choice be placed before him, he can not hesitate. For him outward and inward wealth will not even bear comparison; for they belong to worlds absolutely different in kind, of which the one has no claim on his obedience, while the other demands his fealty by an inalienable right. Nor does he merely obey; his admiration, his love, his worship are given to the unseen. To him righteousness is the altogether beautiful. He sees that while fame and pomp pass

into the land of shadows, and the shouts of servile mobs die into the everlasting silence she plants her foot upon the eternal rock and her form, which has no comeliness to vulgar eyes, is transfigured by a glory from above, and honored by the deathless voice of legislators and prophets. Worldly advantages, then, are not essential to the great purposes of life. If they come, let us thankfully accept them, and use them as a trust from God; and if they stay away, we will not weep for their absence. But spirituality of character can not deprive us of any mental wealth, or in any degree lower our efficiency as men. Communion with the infinite source of life can only enlarge and deepen our life and give us a quicker sympathy with all this universe of God. To the religious man —to one, at least, who in religion as in other things looks not at the seen, but at the unseen, not at organized churches or the letter of sacred books, but the spirit which at once informs and transcends them—all arts and sciences, all literature, from severe treatises of abstract thought to the ethereal creations of poetry, are welcome; and the varied phases of human life attract him by their beauty or their pathos. Nothing but sin appears to belong to an alien region. All else is full of attraction and wonder. The bloom of the flower, the frolic of the lamb or the kitten, the golden hair and laughing eyes of the

child, the serious toils of manhood, its sorrows and its triumphs, its comedies and its tragedies, all seem to belong to him, and to give up their secrets to his sympathy and love. Whether it be his to conquer difficulties by invention, to unfold with the hand of science the record of creation and reveal the hidden processes of nature, to labor day after day at the same monotonous task or to organize and direct some extensive business, to preserve the sanctity of a single household or with the foresight of a statesman to sway the destinies of an empire, he still will be better equipped for his duty, and will bring to its performance a richer endowment of firmness and intelligence, if his eye is fixt, not on the petty delusions of self-love, but on the eternal realities of God.

But are there, then, unseen things which are real, or must we as wise men decline to credit anything which we can not test by our senses? If we reflect a moment, we shall see how blank and unmeaning life would become under any such attempt, and that belief in the unseen, instead of being confined to a few antiquated theologians, mingles with the whole range of our experience.

Turn your eyes first to the men and women around you. What do we see? Nothing but moving forms and colors. But is it to these that we look? Is it for these that we live? No. We believe that enshrined in each form

is an invisible mind, which preserves its self-identity through life, and has its continuous inward history. We believe that there is an intelligence responsive to our own, affections, joys, sorrows, hopes, fears, righteousness or guilt, kindness or malignity, insincerity or truthfulness. Suppose that you could banish this belief, and really think that the men whom you see were nothing more than unconscious figures moving to and fro under the guidance of physical law, that there was no love in the tender eye, no thought or aspiration in its gleam, you would sink into desolation and despair, you the one living thing in this dreadful city of the dead, more lonely than the shipwrecked mariner who strains his eye across the wave from the silence of some sea-encircled rock.

Again, let us take up a book. The eye discerns nothing but a parcel of paper covered with little black marks. But we begin to read; and soon we become unconscious of that which we see—the paper and the black marks—and we are aware of something that the sharpest sight can not detect, and begin to thrill and glow with new emotions, to feel our minds uplifted with mighty thoughts or chained by the spell of cogent reasoning, to enter the poet's mystic land and bow before ideal beauty, or to laugh or weep at the fortunes of those who have long departed from the world of vision. Here, then, once

more, the seen exists only for the sake of the unseen, and without it would be utterly worthless and unmeaning.

Is not the same true of natural scenery? The beauty which is there revealed and which haunts the mind with fair or awful memories, is not discovered by the earthly eye, nor is it discoverable even by the mind that is earthly. The inner organ must be pure before nature will give up her secret meaning or awaken that high emotion which transports us beyond nature, and admits us to the invisible shrine where her wonders are woven by the eternal thought. But this beauty is not less real because the horse or the ass can not behold it. It bears its own authentication, and appeals as convincingly to the soul as any object that the fleshly eye is competent to reach. And now we have entered the eternal realm. The sublimity, the tenderness, the purity of nature dwell among its hills and clouds, but pass not with its changing forms, and the voice of the cataract or the storm has tones that belong not to the idle clash of material elements. Hills and clouds, waterfall and tempest, may pass away; but what in their communion we have seen and heard does not confess the sovereignty of time. Nature is transient, and may go; but while it is with us, it is tremulous with a Spirit that appeals as an abiding reality to our spirits, and to those who can

pass behind the sensible appearance it is the expressive face of God.

Nor can science, with its almost ostentatious devotion to phenomena, escape from this intellectual law. The phenomena out of which it builds its noble edifice are to the fleshly eye a confused and unrelated heap; and if out of the chaos of isolated facts, which alone the mind of primeval man could discern, a glorious cosmos has emerged, framed like a vast city into an organic unity, and controlled by laws which remain unrepealed through all the ages, it is only to the awakened eye of reason that this magnificent spectacle is revealed. The infinite space embosomed in which it lies, the everlasting duration amid which its years are counted, are concealed from every sense, and yet we can not but believe in them as the very conditions of all our experiments and research. Unity and law, which play so important a part in modern speculation, no man can ever look upon or handle; and yet if we scorned these ideas on account of their impalpable character, and refused to import them into our study of nature, the whole fabric of science would collapse. Another idea which is fundamental in theoretical science is that of force. But what power of microscope or what subtlety of analysis can ever disclose it to our senses? Who has ever seen the mighty chain of gravitation stretching across

the desert space, and binding together suns and stars and systems? Who can take hold of the power which agitates the particles of matter into heat, or causes the ether to quiver into light, and say to us, here it is? But because force is thus not a visible, but an invisible reality, apprehended not by the senses, but by the reason alone, are we to fling away the doctrine of the conservation of energy, to snap the ideal links of the universe, and to sink stupidly back into the wilderness of mere phenomena? No! We will trust a higher faculty than that of sense, and believe in force, tho it looks in upon us from the unseen and eternal realm.

The same rule holds good even more manifestly in the domain of conduct. There while our judgment is founded upon visible actions or audible words, which are the channels of communication between us and our fellow men, what we judge is wholly spiritual. It is the unseen mind, with its motives, its conscience, its purpose, that we approve or condemn. Along with the invisible the whole of our moral life would vanish; for a mere external act can elicit neither our praise nor our blame. No one feels gratitude to a steam-engine for its beneficent action; no one visits it with a vote of censure when it breaks down. You must first get among the invisible springs of our activity, and believe in the reality of an unseen will, which abides the same

through all its changing manifestations, or the moral judgment which is sanctioned by the general practise of mankind becomes absurd. But how shall we unlock this awful sanctuary, and read the secrets of souls which, tho so close to us, are yet so impenetrable and mysterious? It is clear that we can do so only through our own inner experience, in that audience chamber where we are conscious of what the ear can never hear. And it is there that we find ourselves most unmistakably transported into a divine and enduring world, where we hold communion with ideas that shine undimmed above the clouds of time, and maintain their constancy while the glitter of human opinion scintillates and dies. It is there that duty presents her imperious claim, refuses to be confounded with the earth-born mob of aspirants, however cunningly drest or however long their pedigree. It is there that justice and mercy assert their eternal prerogative against the cringing demands of selfishness and cruelty. It is there that goodness and holiness unfold their beauty, and, standing in serenity above our passion and strife, evoke the adoration of the enraptured soul. And all these tell us that they are not the offspring of time. They are in us, but they transcend and command us. The flood of circumstance rolls upon its restless course. Earthly ambitions come and go. Selfish dreams, whose horizon

at farthest is death, melt away as we approach. But these never lose their majesty and grace. Never yet has their word proved false. Unchanging, they still beckon us on, and tell us of a brighter and fairer world, where they will be our eternal life, an indwelling glory from the Father of spirits.

Here, then, is the goal toward which our thought has been tending. The invisible soul has been born for an invisible empire. Conscious of its dependence, it looks for a higher than itself, from whom it has sprung, and toward whom it aspires. In the order of evolution the higher succeeds the lower; and as long as we are dealing only with a material organism, we are content to trace it back to simpler and simpler stages of growth. But it is not so in the order of causation. The finished product can not transcend its cause, or the marvels of intelligent life be derived from that which originally had neither intelligence nor life. And therefore when you ask me to climb through the long ascent of being, and show me how nature has slowly grown into fairer forms, and felt her way toward nobler capacities, I still must pass behind the veil of sense, and recognize an eternal cause incessantly at work, an eternal thought unfolding itself into visible manifestation.

The conclusion which is thus demanded by our reason is confirmed by our other faculties.

God is the center and unity of our better life. It is His beauty that is revealed through the sunset glow or the starry pomp of night, It is His voice that speaks to us in conscience, His righteousness that appeals to our faith, and asks for our trustful service. And there is still the faculty of worship, the longing of the soul for God as its native home, the instinctive adoration of One who sums up in himself all ideal good, and the sense of communion with him through all our inward strife, and the promise of peace at last. Thus, wherever we turn, we are conducted to the invisible Presence, and look through vistas of glory toward that central perfection which passes our mortal thought. There is the dwelling-place of the things unseen and eternal, to which in our highest moments we would consecrate our days. There is the everlasting rest and blessedness of the soul, which is permitted to see these things, but not yet to enjoy them in their fulness and purity. There is that holy Son of God who during His mortal pilgrimage enshrined in the temple of His body the eternal life, and made it manifest to men. And there are the spirits of the beloved, whose visible tokens have passed from our earthly sight, but who are alive for evermore. Thither may our affections rise, that looking not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, we may convert this earth into

a scene for the triumphs of faith, until this mortal puts on immortality, and this dear world, with so much of beauty and love and joy mingled with its sadness, melts away in the light of the eternal heaven.

DYKES

THE CHAMPION WHO SLAYS THE DRAGON

JAMES OSWALD DYKES

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THE CHAMPION WHO SLAYS THE DRAGON

Prin. J. Oswald Dykes, D.D.

"It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel."—Gen. 3 : 15.

Most nations which have achieved independence and renown, have either possest or fabled in the dawn of their origin some famous national hero—the champion and the deliverer of his people. Indeed, the earliest names that have struggled down to us, encrusted with legend, from dim ages, are probably the names of strong and valiant men who in their day wrought a kind of deliverance on the earth. In the most primitive times of all the contest was necessarily with hostile powers of nature; the monster of the forest or the pestilential swamp. How many a dragon legend is to be found in traditional story; how many a giant to be slain; how many a tale of romantic exploit by adventurous pioneers, who pierced the savage wildernesses of the world to clear its forests, slay its wolves, drain and till its fens, till the land grew safe and healthy for human habitation. Within historic periods, the task of a national champion has more often been to contend with hostile tribes, to fire his countrymen with the

love of freedom or to lead their resistance against some more powerful neighbor. But whether it be in the legend of a Hercules or Perseus, or of Romulus or Arthur, or in the more sober pages which record the name of Leonidas or Tell, Wallace or Washington, all such champions represent a battle which has never ceased since the world was—the ancient endless battle of spirit against brute strength or craft, of order against lawless self-will, of liberty against tyranny, of light against darkness. It is with good right that such tales, dear to the heart of boyhood, linger on in the memory of grown men. For they all preserve some obscure episode or another in the struggle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. Strangely distorted as they may be or drest in allegory and in fable, they do serve for unconscious types of His mighty task who from the beginning has been the expected champion of human deliverance.

In men of this heroic type no nation's story was ever richer than the sacred annals of the Jews, with one notable distinction. Such names as Moses, Joshua, Samson, Gideon, David, represent deliverances wrought for their fellow countrymen indeed; yet deliverances in which, not man, but God Himself was the evident and acknowledged Deliverer, even more than in the case of their fellow Semites, tho the trait is a Semitic one. In

the nation's perils, whether from the Egyptian, or the Bedouin, or the Canaanite, warrior after warrior was raised up, champion after champion, stout of heart and strong of arm; yet always he bore Jehovah's direct commission; always he acted in Jehovah's name; always it was not his bow or sword the people were taught to extol, but the outstretched arm of Israel's God and King. While most other nations, therefore, semi-deified their ancient heroes, this was the language of the Hebrew poet:

> Thou art my king, O God! command deliverances for Jacob!
> Through thee will we push down our enemies:
> Through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.

One example will show how this continued to be the sentiment of the best men in the nation till the close of its career. The last of Israel's great "deliverances" was that from the bondage in Babylon. In speaking of this, the most eloquent of its prophets depicts Jehovah as contemplating "with dismay" the waste and wrongful ruin inflicted upon His repentant people by heathen hands. "Wondering" that no man arose to redress such oppression, He Himself, Jehovah, arms Himself for the combat. With justice for a breastplate, salvation for a head-piece, and the zeal of an avenger for a warrior's crimson cloak,

the Almighty descends into the arena against Israel's adversaries:

> His own arm—it brought him salvation;
> And his righteousness—it sustained him!

Thus by worthier and still worthier instances do we approach that supreme Hero and Deliverer of mankind, divine yet human, who, predicted in the infancy of our race, was manifested in its old age. Fulfiller of all Gentile and Hebrew hope, greater than all Gentile or Hebrew precedent, Jesus is the champion of all men's cause, who in single combat has overthrown the giant dragon, fountain of unnumbered woes, and won for every nation rest and liberty and prosperous life.

Keeping in view this aspect of our Lord's work, foreshadowed in the first prophecy, let me single out in a few sentences some of His characteristics as the ideal champion—dragon-slayer, and rescuer of men from evil.

In the first place our Lord stands alone in this, that He aims at the deliverance of all men from all evil. In other words, it is rescue universal He seeks to compass, and rescue complete. Not the men of a tribe or of a land only, but man as man, human nature and the human family in its integrity. As much as this is implied in the title given Him in this ancient oracle—"the seed of the

woman." And the same idea is continued in the title (with a similar meaning) which He adopted for Himself: "the Son of man." It is as One qualified to represent every other human being, the Head therefore and the champion of us all, that He enters the lists. And the deliverance is to be as thorough as its benefits will be wide. For He fights not against this or that form of evil, for this or that single blessing; but against the head seat and fontal source of all human ill, that He may restore us to the whole of our forfeited inheritance. His adversary is the ancient serpent, to whose craft human innocence fell a prey. In him is summed up, as in a single head, the whole of that alien and hostile force with which, under its innumerable hydra shapes, men have been contending from the beginning. In these combatants are incarnated, as it were, two realms of good and evil. "He shall bruise thy head."

From this we gather, in the second place, the region and character of the struggle. Human nature and human life are devastated by a malignant power, not native to us, but intruding from without. Where is its chief seat or citadel? When our Lord Himself described His task under this figure of a combat with the ruler of the darkness, He spoke of "the strong man armed," as one whose goods must lie in peace so long as he held possession of his "house," his central fortress and habi-

tation of strength, where like a robber chieftain he sits secure, lording it over the whole territory of this world. Now, what is this "house" of Satan, where first he must be mastered and bound, if ever the goods he has ravished from us are to be restored? It is the moral nature and moral choice of man himself. It is by perverting to sin the tastes and preferences of each of us, as of the first human pair, that evil gains admittance to the true citadel of life. The central seat of the mischiefs that afflict mankind lies there: in a heart turned aside from God, subdued to lawless desire and preferring evil to good. All evils flow from choosing the bad; and choosing the bad from distrust of God. Within the wide circumference of physical lies moral evil; and at the core of moral you lay your finger on religious evil—the sin of an ungodly nature. Here sits the grisly king that holds us captive; and here must the true Deliverer grapple with the power that has ruined man. It follows that the theater of this tremendous conflict is to be sought inside of man's own spiritual being. Have we not here the key to the mysterious experience of temptation which, like a dark thread, traversed and colored the earthly life of Jesus? From His first great trial in the wilderness to His last in the olive-garden, Jesus' life was a struggle against evil choice, conducted within the recesses of His own personal

life; a fight for purity and goodness and pious trust against every form of seductive or appalling evil, fought out in His own human soul. The weapons of His warfare were not carnal, but spiritual. He fought first to safeguard the citadel of His personal integrity and holiness. Like the ideal knight of romance, He became invincible only by being pure. To borrow His own words: The prince of this world came, but found nothing of his own in Him.

It is quite in harmony with this inward and moral character of Christ's own conflict that His victory should always work from within men outward. The evils of life which are the first to arrest attention and claim deliverance of some sort, are such as affect the body and its outward well-being; physical evils, first of all, in the wild beasts and savage and destructive elements which have to be overcome if human life is to grow orderly, settled and civilized. There, also, are the oppression of man's rights by his stronger fellow man; individual slavery, serfdom, subjection of woman, military oppression of one tribe by another, feudal lordship over vassals, despotic forms of government. Even now the evils we most keenly realize and of which we most loudly complain are such as arise out of social or political causes. Ignorance, pauperism, class legislation, expensive justice, preventible disease, contests of labor

with capital—such are the modern ills to which brave men toil to apply a remedy. True successors they of their forefathers who fought the savage beast or curbed the rage of kings. The form of the contest has changed, but we have still, under other forms, to compel the elements of nature to minister to human welfare; still to check, if we can not prevent, the wasteful action of social injustice and selfish passion. But while all other champions of human deliverance are thus operating on the outside, more or less, Jesus to this hour continues to act by preference from within. He did not ride abroad redressing wrongs; nor does He yet. He did not make war in His own day upon unequal laws or domestic slavery or military despotism. No more is it here that we are now to look for His peculiar sphere. But knowing that if once the individual will be renewed, all other reforms will follow of themselves, Christ goes to the root of the disorder. He acts on units first in order to act the better on the mass. He aims at religious, that He may achieve moral, social, and political regeneration. He addresses to each of us His gracious word and desires leave to put forth within us His regenerating power. Within your soul He wants to be master in the name of God—to break down the fortress of pride, to sweeten the sour temper, to bridle the hot lips of passion, to reconcile you to the dominion of your

Heavenly Father, to restore to the little inner realm of your heart order and law and peace and purity and sweet graciousness. For if that be but done, and the serpent of selfishness within you wounded to death, and the strong evil power of ungodly preference and rebellious will chained, then full well does He know that in the train of that victory will flow all victories, and that spiritual deliverance will be the harbinger of all deliverances.

Here, then, is a champion fit for such of us—(pity they should be so few!)—as desire above all things to subdue sin within themselves. If this be the enterprise on which you are bent—to slay the dragons of pride, temper, lust and ungodliness within you—be sure One is at your side who fighteth for you! This is His elected field of combat, and these spiritual enemies who oppress your better will, and threaten forever to quench the life of faith—these are the foes He has faced in personal encounter and subdued. Cling to His aid and faint not! Grasp His weapons and strike hard! Lean your feebleness against Christ's mighty arm and hide you beneath the shield of His protection: for this is He by whom "the principalities" have been worsted, "the rulers of the darkness of this world," the "spiritual wickedness" that sits in "heavenly" places! This is He who bruised the serpent's head.

In the third place, the character of Jesus

Christ is our ideal of the hero. I said His weapons were spiritual, not carnal. They were so because the struggle is a moral one within the heart. Unlike in this all His types in romance or in heroic tale, nevertheless He required for His enterprise the same high qualities of soul which men praise in them. What are the hard tasks given to the sons of men? To face physical peril with material weapons; to beard the lion like David or rend him like Samson; to brave toil and exposure and fatigue, whether in battle or in exile, or in pioneering the steps of the colonist and the trader in arctic frost or tropic swamp; to lead a philanthropic movement or advocate a just reform in its early unpopular days when public ridicule assails it—these all are enterprises of very dissimilar character and all of them unlike our Lord's contest with sin. Yet the qualities which these call forth and exercise in brave men were still more demanded for His work. What is the type of nobleness men style heroic? What ideal floats before the enthusiastic imagination when in youth we picture to ourselves the chivalrous champion of right against powerful wrong? On the one side, the manful virtues: strength, skill, endurance of hardship, tenacity of purpose, fearless valor, indifference to blows or pain, and the power to smite evil with unsparing hand. Yet on the other side—no less tenderness to the weak,

pity for the oppressed, magnanimity, generosity, scorn of all meanness, hatred of all cruelty and lies. My friends, I am describing Jesus Christ. If it be not actually from Himself we have drawn our ideal of the blameless hero, at least in Him is that ideal realized. True, He wore no sword of steel. With no earthly arms He fought, but with saintly meekness, with continual prayer, with words of heavenly truth, with deeds of gentle kindness. All the resistance which He offered to evil was the resistance of His will to sin; to armed hostility, to brute force He offered none. He gave His wrist to the fetter and His back to the scourge. He let the serpent bite Him in the heel, the lowest and only vulnerable part, which was His material life and fleshly mortal body. That heel of His He suffered to be stung unresisting; yet with the very heel that was stung did He crush the serpent's head. For in such a contest of spiritual and moral forces, material defeat is often the substance of victory. In physical weakness Jesus discovered His true strength—strength to endure for love's and justice's sake. Thus He overcame, not by material, but moral forces: in meekness, not in pride; suffering a seeming defeat, not with the insolence of a triumph. He crowned bleeding brows with a coronet of thorn and wielded a reed for a rod of power. But from His example heroism learned a new nobleness. What

tenacity was His to a generous enterprise! What firmness of moral fiber, true as steel to duty! What silent courage to sustain disaster hopefully and take buffets without complaint! What prodigality of Himself! What unselfish sacrifice for others! W' at fearlessness of foes in earth or hell! What amazing strength of soul veiled under lamblike submission! As the contest was without parallel, so was this a hero without compeer!

Of one heroic attribute, at the least, has He need to this hour. A victory which is spiritual is a hidden victory. A deliverance which begins within man's soul and works thence outward is slow to become apparent. The spiritual intelligences in heaven and earth, who look beneath the surface, know that the fatal dominion of Satan over man has long been a broken and a doomed dominion. The first sinful soul whom the cross of Jesus turned into a penitent and His grace lifted to Paradise was token enough that the head of the evil one was bruised, sin, in principle at least, destroyed, death (as Paul says) abolished, and victory won for mankind over its ancient foe. Yet because the rescue and the victory lie within the spiritual sphere, in the change of each man's relations to God and the renewal of each man's will, therefore they are realized but slowly, man by man, and they do not at first betray themselves by any material consequences. The bruising of

Jesus' heel we see; for that was physical suffering. The crushing of Satan's head we do not see; for that was a moral conquest. Hence is this champion robbed of His meed of laurel. Men will not praise what they can not see; nor applaud a success that leaves the physical condition of humanity where it was. Very slowly indeed, and in a very partial measure, Christ has shown Himself able to better the social, political, and even material condition of the nations. That has come about very fitfully, very gradually, and very imperfectly. Yet to this extent and no further is Christ owned by the world at large as a benefactor. His real claim, His great achievement, the world overlooks. Let us try to be wiser than the world! Ask for eyes to see things spiritual. Pray to be no longer blind to the true meaning of Christ's work or the true glory of His conquest. Enter by faith into the victory He achieved for you over sin and Satan, over death and hell; and by faith and prayer and spiritual effort make that victory your own. He bruised Satan for you; in you He will bruise him likewise. He will enable you to bruise him. He will make you sharers in His own inward and moral supremacy over temptation, fear, unbelief, fleshly desire, and spiritual pride—helping you also to plant your foot upon the head of every sin that lifts itself within your soul. It may be you, too, will suffer in the process. It may be your

heel must be stung. It may be you have to pay with material loss or bodily pain for each moral victory you win. It may be, therefore, that no splendid or pleasant fruits of conquest are yours to boast of in this life. Meantime your victory over the dragon may be as far from apparent as your Lord's. Yet wait. I said He had still need of one attribute of heroes. Here it is: Patience to wait for the fruits of victory. This also belongs to the conquest of faith over sense, of spirit over matter. To believe that the dragon's head is bruised; that the lord of the castle is bound and his power passed into better hands; that all things therefore will be righted one day, and the real conqueror crowned, and His true followers made glad, and all old things pass and all things grow new; to believe this now, when little or nothing of it is to be seen; to believe in it, I say, and to wait for it and in patience work for it: here is the faith and patience of the saints!

EDWARDS

MAN THE MASTER OF HIS ENVIRONMENT

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MAN THE MASTER OF HIS ENVIRONMENT.

The Rev. Prof. D. Miall Edwards, M.A.

"Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."—Rom. 12 : 2.

One of the great words in the vocabulary of to-day is the word "environment." It is a hackneyed and commonplace remark to say that a man's character is influenced by his environment. This is so true as to be a truism. It is, indeed, so threadbare a truth as almost to need an apology for repeating it. It does not require any special intelligence to perceive that our character and conduct and opinions are, to a great extent, molded and fashioned by our surroundings. It is obvious to the man in the street. It is a matter of daily observation. For this reason, biographies of great men generally contain an account of the surroundings in which they were born and bred, and in which their character was molded. One of the first things a biographer does is to give you a description of the natural scenery which surrounded the great man in his youth, because the external aspects of nature amid which he grew have stamped their impress on his mind and character. Then, as you read on, you will find

a description of the intellectual and moral atmosphere of the early home, of the school and schoolmasters that molded his plastic mind, of the social and religious influences of his early surroundings. Why does the writer go into all these details? Because he recognizes the fact that environment is one of the master-forces that rule the life of man. Look back to your own history, and you will find that it is so. Do you not find that the surroundings in which you have lived have become interwoven into the very tissue of your life? How different you would have been had you spent your life in a different environment! Suppose, for instance, you had spent your days in the heart of China, remote from all European influences; suppose you had been cradled and reared in a Mohammedan country, far away from the Christian atmosphere, what a different person you would have been! We are what we are very largely because we have lived in a certain country at a certain period, and because our environment has stamped itself on our character and habits and thoughts. We have imbibed the opinions and have been fashioned by the customs which we have found existing around us.

Hence the importance of making constant efforts to improve the physical and moral surroundings in which men live. It is the duty of the State to provide for its citizens an environment that shall be favorable to their

physical and moral well-being. It is the duty of parents to make the atmosphere of home life helpful to the healthy development of the child in body, mind and spirit. It is the duty and privilege of Christian churches to create a spiritual atmosphere conducive to the development of Christian graces and virtues. For our life is largely shaped by the external influences with which we are surrounded.

Now all this is true, but it is not the whole truth. It is an important half-truth, but half-truths, when taken as the whole truth, are the greatest falsehoods. There is a tendency in the popular philosophy of to-day to exaggerate the importance of the environment that molds the man, at the expense of the man that molds the environment. There is a tendency to turn environment almost into a god, and to fall down and worship it as if it were omnipotent. How often do we hear remarks that imply that man is merely a creature of circumstances, the tool and toy of his surroundings! By the way people talk you might imagine that character is altogether a question of climate; that religion is merely a matter of geography; that the moods of the mind are determined solely by the state of the weather; that, in fact, ethics and theology are only a department of meteorology! You might think that the soul of man has no power of initiation, no creative faculty or function, but is simply a piece of dead, inanimate clay

molded or shaped by external circumstances over which it has no control.

The baneful effect of this view is apparent. It paralyzes moral effort. It minimizes moral responsibility. If my character is simply the product of my surroundings, am I any longer to be held responsible for my actions? Am I to be blamed for my sins? Or shall I not transfer the blame to that tyrant and despot whose slave I am, and whom people call "environment"? Why should I make futile attempts to steer my own course in life when the odds are all against me? Had I not better resign myself to the current of events, and drift comfortably with the tide of circumstances?

There is something wrong in that view. We are responsible beings. There is a voice within us that tells us so—the voice of conscience. There is another and a more authoritative voice above us that tells us the same thing—the voice of God. God has given us the power to mold our own character, and to fashion our own destiny. We should not drift, but steer. We should not float, but swim. True, God has placed us in stormy seas, and we often feel ourselves at the mercy of the waves. But He has placed in our vessel a rudder whereby we can guide our course, and if we go adrift, it will be through our own fault. We can not blame circumstances. True, there may be extenuating circumstances that partly excuse

a man for his sins and mistakes. There may be impure surroundings that make it difficult to live a pure life. But difficult does not spell impossible. Man is a creature of circumstances—to a certain extent, yes. But he is still more a creator of circumstances, and he has his destiny in his own hands. We are influenced by our environment—true. But we have it in our power to rise above our environment and to triumph over it.

That is what Paul exhorts the Roman Christians to do. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Bear in mind to whom these words were written. They were written to Christians in Rome—corrupt, pagan, skeptical Rome. The whole environment of that city was not only unchristian, but antichristian.

All the external influences were hostile to the spiritual life. The atmosphere was charged with foul and pestilential germs that were a poison to the soul. And yet Paul believed it was possible to be a Christian, even in Rome. It was possible to dwell in the midst of its corruption without lowering the flag of purity. It was possible to breathe its pestilential air without catching the fever of worldliness. It was possible to walk through its muddy streets without soiling the white garment of sainthood. In the first chapter he addresses the epistle "to all that be in

Rome. . . . called to be saints." And so he assumes that it was possible to be a saint even in Rome. He speaks of saints in Cæsar's household. But in order that this grand possibility should become an actual achievement, it was necessary that they should not conform to their surroundings, but be transformed above it by the renewing of their mind. And so Paul does not preach to the Roman Christians that easy-going, comfortable but damnable doctrine which we have heard, "Do in Rome as Rome does." He wrote to them boldly, "Be not conformed to the manner of life that prevails around you in Rome, but transcend it by the power of God's spirit."

The general principle of my text, stated in modern terms, is this: Man is not to be the slave, but the master of his environment. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." The mind is the master of the world, not its slave. The soul is greater than circumstances. Paul does not preach the doctrine of conformity, but (to coin a word) the doctrine of transformity.

Conformity is the favorite doctrine of today. There is a school of modern thought which persistently teaches that the condition of life everywhere is conformity with environment. Wherever we find life, we are told, whether it be in the vegetable world, or in the animal world, or in man, the condition of

its maintenance and growth is that it be in harmony with its surroundings. As soon as any living organism falls out of correspondence with its environment, it dies.

And there is a certain amount of truth in that view. Take a tree or a flower as an instance. Why does the tree grow and flourish? Because it is on friendly terms with its surroundings. The climate agrees with it. The soil is in harmony with it. The temperature of the air and the quality of the earth are in correspondence with the nature of the tree. Therefore it lives and grows. Remove it to another climate, and it will die. The palm-tree flourishes in the warm, congenial climate of the southern countries, but transplant it to the cold and fickle climate of our country, and it becomes a poor, stunted, miserable-looking plant, because its nature can not perfectly conform to its new environment.

But there is another and a more important truth. Life has the power of rising above its environment, of transcending it, and of transforming it into something better. Indeed, I maintain that the essential and distinguishing feature of life is its capacity to do this very thing.

Look again at the flower. Have you not wondered how the flower transforms its surroundings into a new beauty? It does not conform; it transforms. Look at the rose, the queen of flowers, planted in the common soil,

yet transmuting that soil into rich hues and sweet fragrance that are the wonder and delight of all. It is not conformed to the soil in which it is rooted, but is transformed into a higher beauty. It is not the slave of the dust, but its master.

Think again of the power of life revealed in the animal kingdom. What is life in the animal but power to overcome external influences by virtue of its own vitality? See the skylark mounting upward and heavenward by the mysterious power of its wings, and singing triumphantly as it mounts "in profuse strains of unpremeditated art." A stone thrown up into mid-air is speedily drawn back to earth, just because it is dead; it needs a living bird to transcend the power of gravitation. A fish in the stream can swim against the current, while the dead piece of wood or leaf is at its mercy.

And so in the world of man. The mark of true manhood is not conformity, but "transformity." Small men, it is true, would fain follow the line of least resistance, and are content to be at the mercy of the flowing tide. But giants can stem the tide of circumstance, and turn it to their own advantage. Anybody can conform; the manly and heroic thing is to transform.

And so it is preeminently in the spiritual life, where life realizes its full potency and promise. The indwelling Spirit of God in a

man's heart enables him to rise above his surroundings, to swim against the tide, and to live the saintly life in a sinful world. The spiritual life is not a life of conformity. It is a life which transcends and overcomes the world. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Paul had knowledge within himself of the transforming power of divine grace; and therefore he addrest the Roman Christians with such words as these, Be not conformed to what you see around you, for by the renewing of your mind you may be raised above it. Do you complain of the moral corruption and wickedness of the city in which you dwell? Be like the lily in the mud, which transmutes the smells of the stagnant pool into fragrance, and the sordidness of the mud into beauty. What if the worldliness of Rome be like the weight of gravitation which would drag the aspiring soul to earth; be like the soaring skylark, and mount up on wings of believing prayer to the very gates of heaven, singing songs of triumph and of praise as you mount. What if the current of wickedness in Rome be as the rushing stream which seeks to carry all before it; is not the grace of God still stronger? Is not the mind renewed by God's Holy Spirit strong enough to resist the stream of corruption, and to swim against the current? "Be not conformed to this world, but

be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Let us proceed to the practical application of this principle to our own lives. Our text reminds us of the name by which we Free Churchmen have become known in history—Non-conformists. We have received that name because at one great period in history our fathers refused, on religious grounds, to conform to the laws of the State. It was a noble and necessary stand they made, and one which required much faith and courage and sacrifice. It may be that the non-conformity of some of us is but a species of conformity, a blind adhesion to the tradition in which we have been reared, rather than a reasoned and intelligent conviction. But we are called upon to be non-conformists in a wider sense than the denominational which, after all, includes but a section of humanity. Emerson struck the larger note in those memorable words, "Whoso would be a man must be a non-conformist"; that is, must have courage to do and to think what is right, even at the expense of refusing to conform to usual custom and conventional thinking. But the words of Paul touch a far deeper note than those of Emerson, for they express the heroism of faith, the victory of the transformed life, the triumphant "non-conformity" of the mind renewed by God's Spirit. "Be not conformed to this world,

but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind''; every Christian heart ''vibrates to that iron string.''

We have need of Paul's stirring exhortation to-day, to lift us out of servile conformity to the spirit of the age, and to remind us that we are not of this world, tho we dwell in it. We, too, are called to be saints in a crooked and perverse generation. It may be said that it is not as difficult for us to-day to live the saintly life as it was for those early Christians, who lived in an atmosphere of gross paganism and rampant unbelief. To-day there is not the same antagonism between the Church and the world, for even the atmosphere of the world has been largely suffused by Christian ideas and purified by Christian influence.

And yet, is not the spirit of the world even to-day keenly hostile to spirituality? As those early Christians were surrounded by the atheism and corruption of Rome, so we are surrounded by the subtle and all-pervasive spirit of worldliness, which is poisonous to the higher life, and which makes prayer and holy living and communion with God so difficult. The spirit of the world is ever seeking to clip the wings of the soul that dares attempt to scale the heights of the higher life, and so to drag it down to the dust.

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.

Do we not feel as we walk along the highways and byways of life and intermingle with our fellow men in daily business, that we are surrounded by influences which make it difficult for us to live the life of prayer and heavenly purity? How difficult it is to share in the life and pursuits of the world, and yet to "keep one's self unspotted from the world." We have to live day by day in the midst of worldly-minded men, whose whole ambition in life is of the earth earthy, whose aim is the attainment of wealth, not holiness; success, not sanctity; and who, to attain their ends, often resort to methods and practises which are, to say the least, not in harmony with the high standard of our religion. And how prone we are to lower our flag, to accommodate our ideals to theirs, to make unworthy compromises, to conform to worldly practises. We are ashamed to stand out as an exception among men, for fear of being laughed at, accused of eccentricity, or charged, forsooth, with being out of fashion. And so we bow before the god of fashion, and kneel before the prince of this world, and conform to worldly ideals. Oh, the timidity and base servility of much of our Christian life! My soul, arise from the dust, go forth and conquer. Thou art not the world's slave, but its master. Knowest thou not that "the saints shall rule the world"? Hast thou forgotten that "whoso would

be a man must be a non-conformist," and that whoso would be a Christian must overcome the world? Be not, then, conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind.

Do we doubt the possibility of living above the level of one's surroundings? Has not the possibility been proved and actualized in all ages of the world's history? Even in pre-Christian times and in pagan lands men have been known to rise above their low surroundings, transformed by the indwelling power of the faith they held. How much more should the faith we hold—the Christian faith—enable us to do this! Let me cull an instance or two from the field of history.

Do you remember the story of Ahijah in the Old Testament? How, like a rose in the dunghill, a lily in the mud, was that young life! Ahijah, you will recollect, was the son of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin—a man whose evil influence was like a contagious disease in the community of Israel. And yet in the household of that Jeroboam grew up that pure lily, young Ahijah. Listen to two passages from the ancient narrative. The first describes the terrible doom that was to come on the house of Jeroboam as a punishment for its wickedness.

"Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam. . . . and will take away the remnant of the house of Jero-

boam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone." The influence of that corrupt court is likened unto dung, filling the air, as it were, with unhealthy germs that endangered the moral sanitation of the community. But out of that same dung there sprang up a rose that filled the air with fragrance. Here is the second passage, referring to the death of Ahijah. "And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him; for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave; because, in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam."

Or take the case of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the three non-conformists of Babylon, who preferred to face the fiery furnace rather than conform to the idolatry of Babylon, and so transgress the law of conscience and of God. Their reply to King Nebuchadnezzar is worth quoting: "Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." When we remember how reluctant we are to say "no" to the powers of this world, and how ready to bow the knee to the golden image, do not these early heroes cause us to blush? And does not Daniel in the lion's den put to shame our craven spirit of conformity to the world and its low standards of life and conduct?

What, then, shall we say of the heroes of the New Testament and of Christian ages, of

Peter and Paul, of Francis of Assisi and Savonarola, of Luther and Cromwell, of the great and noble army of Christian martyrs and saints in all times and climes? Shall we not say that they have proved beyond a doubt the possibility of overcoming the world by the power of divine grace? Such men were no mere creatures of their own age; they were creators of a new age. They were not conformed to this world; rather, being first inwardly transformed, they became transformers of the world and of history, and so proved what is "that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." And what was possible for them is also possible for us.

It were easy to multiply instances. But the crowning instance of all is Jesus of Nazareth, our divine exemplar, who lived in the world and yet was not of it, who conquered the evil environment of His time, and said for our encouragement, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world"; who "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin"; who mingled with publicans and sinners, and yet was not contaminated by the contact, even as the sun can touch the mire without contracting dirt. And this is no mere ideal as unattainable as it is beautiful. It is the practical ideal which Christ ever sets before His followers. For, did He not say, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them

from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. . . . And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth"?

Let us hold up the banner of sanctity, in whatsoever circumstances we may be placed. Let us remember that "pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this . . . to keep ourselves unspotted from the world." There may be circumstances in which this is difficult. But we have no right to say that it is impossible.

There are some whose misfortune it is to live in an ungodly home. Of all the sad sights which this sad world supplies, an ungodly home is the saddest—a home which is devoid of such spiritual sunshine as would encourage the young bud to open out into flower, a home which is a wilderness rather than a garden, and where the flower of virtue is choked by the weeds. If there is any one in such a plight, to him I say, Be a saint in Rome; be a flower in the wilderness; be a rose among thorns and nettles. A few years ago there was a great commotion in the newspapers over the exposure of the fraudulent practises of Madame Humbert and her family in France. You may remember how, by her daring and unscrupulous schemes, that remarkable woman brought financial ruin upon

many people who had been drawn into her meshes, and succeeded in throwing dust in the eyes of some of the greatest financiers of the day. For many and many a year she and her family had lived in an atmosphere of utter falsehood and deceit. And yet, I have seen it stated that she had a daughter in her household who, in the midst of all that rottenness and corruption, grew up to be the very incarnation of purity and innocence. God can give us strength to be saints in godless homes; and being, ourselves, inwardly transformed by the renewing of our mind, who knows but that we may in turn transform those same homes into temples of God?

There may be a young man who finds it difficult to live the religious life because he is surrounded in his daily business by men who scoff and despise religion. Perhaps he is living in a foul atmosphere. Perhaps he is thrown into the company of men whose influence is a deadly poison to the finer instincts and susceptibilities of the soul. Perhaps he finds his business rivals dealing in little dishonest tricks and sharp practises and shady schemes. And it may be that he is tempted to do the same thing lest he should fall behind in the race of life? Others are doing it, then why not he? Let me exhort him in the name of God and of Christ Jesus our Lord, Be not conformed to the evil influences and evil practises of surroundings. Do not

lower the standard as a Christian, even for a moment. Swim against the current; conquer the world's gravitation. Be a saint in Rome; be a lily in the mud; be a daisy in the gutter. Who knows but that in time we may transform our evil surroundings into a paradise of God. In the meantime, let us dare to be non-conformists; true to our own convictions and ideals.

FAIRBAIRN

CHRIST IN GALILEE

ANDREW MARTIN FAIRBAIRN

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CHRIST IN GALILEE

A. M. Fairbairn, M.A., D.D.

"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God."—Mark 1 : 14.
"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."—Mark 16 : 15.

Of these texts, the one describes Christ's acts in founding His kingdom, and the other states the commission He gave to the men who had as their duty and mission to extend and perpetuate the kingdom He had founded. There are two points from which these two acts may be viewed—the contemporary and the historical. If we try to see this act of founding as contemporaries, what visions will these simple words of Mark call up, "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God?" He will appear before us as a Jew, lowly born, humbly bred, without the manners of the court or the capital, without the learning of the school, or the culture of the college; a mere peasant, as it were, just like the unlettered workmen of Nazareth, or the toil-stained rustics of Galilee. He becomes a preacher, just as Amos the herdsman of Tekoah and multitudes more of His people had done, but He is flouted by

the Pharisees, contradicted by the scribes, hated and persecuted by the priests. In a word, He is despised and rejected of the official guardians of religion, and heard gladly by the common people alone. The men He gathers round Him are, like Himself, without the delicate thought or the fastidious speech—not always accurate or pure—of the man of conscious culture, or the thorough knowledge of all that is superficial in man, which marks the person high in place and familiar with affairs. Now, what would men accustomed to a perspective given by those who are accounted pillars in Church and State think of this preacher and His rustic band? Pascal puts the matter far too mildly when he says Jesus Christ lived in such obscurity that the great historians of the world who are concerned with the affairs of State have hardly noticed Him. He who from the heavens watcheth the ways of men might well laugh in infinite irony as He heard the poet praise Cæsar as divine, or the historian bid all eyes to behold the acts of Pilate, and blind as death to the deeds of Christ. If the historian had tried to notice and to describe Him, what would he have said? Something like this: "In those days one Jesus of Nazareth, a carpenter, began to preach, and gathered around Him certain ignorant fisher-folk after the manner of His kind, but all the people of repute held aloof, and the chief

priest, with adroit and most excellent diplomacy, when this Jesus became troublesome, induced the procurator to crucify Him." Had we depended on the historian of great deeds there would have been the limit of his vision, and it would mark the immensity of his ignorance and our own. Happily, eyes truer and keener of sight watched His coming, and by their help we can see the entrance into the world of the greatest person and the most creative truth, and the process by which they slowly penetrated the spirit of man, and worked his saving. It was Godlike that He should enter and begin in silent lowliness. All God's great works are silent. They are not done amid rattle of drums and flare of trumpets. Light as it travels makes no noise, utters no sound to the ear. Creation is a silent process; nature rose under the Almighty hand without clang or clamor, or noises that distract and disturb. So, when Jesus came, being of God, His coming was lowly. The most common of all things known of men is birth; the most strange and wonderful of all the things that come to man is the child that is born; but the most marvelous of all births is the birth of Him that Herod stayed not to watch, and Rome did not know, but which all the after ages have turned back to regard as the supreme coming of God into man. And as the child came, so came the King, founding His kingdom by humble word, by lowly deed,

by life among men; amid His own people, at the side of His own sea, in His own province of Galilee, He preached the gospel of the kingdom. When the moment came that His work was done, and He had to pass to the Father, His going was as silent as His coming, noted only by the men who loved Him; and that departure was no evening shading into darkest night; it is a day that can never set, but only be absorbed into the splendor of His own coming, the everlasting glory of His eternal home. The two texts put together will give us two distinct truths or messages, which yet are one. One is the personal ministry of Christ, the other is the apostolic ministry of His people as the continuation and realization of His own.

Starting with His personal ministry, there are three things growing out of this text that are notable: There is, first, the place where it is exercised—Galilee; there is, secondly, the men among whom it is exercised—the disciples, called from sea and boat; and there is, thirdly, the substance of His preaching—the gospel of the kingdom of God.

Note the place, Galilee, the circle of the Gentiles. Where would you have thought Jesus would go to found His kingdom, to begin His ministry? Why, of course, if He had been an astute man of the world, up there, at Jerusalem. There was the great temple of His people, there the ornate and ancient

priesthood, there the extended and venerated worship, there the historical associations of His race and of its king. Was ever city so loved by men as was Jerusalem? Poets praised it; beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth was Mount Zion. The people had loved it; there Solomon had planted his temple; and there, amid poverty, pain and war, a few returned exiles had built another and still more gracious; there the people of God had known the siege of the heathen; there they had known the deliverance of the Most High. The great prophet of the exile had broken into immortal poetry in praise of that city where God dwelt, and toward which all nations should come. Athens may be the eye of Greece, illustrious in wisdom; Rome may be the synonym of imperial and ecclesiastical power; Mecca may speak of a prophet that conquered by the sword, and Benares of one that rules as with a rod of iron millions of our race; but Jerusalem is preeminent as the city of faith, the birthplace of a religion whose very stones were dear to those that loved her. There, then, it might have seemed, Jesus would begin to exercise His ministry. There were rabbis to listen to Him, there were priests to support Him, there were scribes to report Him; all around it seemed the firm soil for His work; but nay, tho He knew that a prophet must perish in Jerusalem, the ministry that was to be fruitful for all time must

be exercised elsewhere. He would not throw His soul into the midst of conflict, while conflict would have soiled the serenity of His soul. He would not seek the men bound to fashion and form and place, He would seek those that would gather around Him, ready to be made by His work. He did not need to nurse human sin; left to itself it would breed passion, create jealousy, make the awful hour of His agony and the awful majesty of His cross. But He had to seek love, nurse it and cultivate it, and gather it to His bosom, and bear it there. He wanted the silence that was nurture, He wanted the obscurity that was growth, He wanted the cloistered security of nature, as it were, where His own loved people would learn to know and would learn to love Him, and be made fit to be preachers to all ages and models for all time. Tho of humble birth, scorned by the proud of blood and culture, He had the supernal wisdom, and saw in the quiet of His own province the ministry that could be a well of truth and grace.

Then there is the second point, the men among whom His ministry is exercised. Here, again, you would have imagined that wisdom would have gone in search of the priests and the scribes, and the great men of culture and of training. Nature, once it is formed, is very hard to reform, and the danger of getting hold of a man of great ancestral rights

s that he will adhere to the rights till they ecome great human wrongs. These men with heir fashions of robe and garment, these men vith their positions and postures, with their ncense and altars—what had they in common vith Him who wanted not things, but men?

But, on the other hand, see how easily and ompletely the unformed can be formed by Him who knows how to make them. These isciples had the simplicity of children; they ere malleable, they were soft in His plastic and; He could take them and He could make hem, and when they were made they would e the men He desired. And note one wonrous thing! The people, the common people, s proud men say, are apt to fanaticism; they ve the intense passion after small things hat we call by that unkindly name. But no en ever became less fanatics, more perfectly uman enthusiasts than the simple men Jesus rmed. Fanaticism is zeal for trifles, enusiasm is zeal for humanity. Fanaticism external, is the devotion of a spirit thrown er upon, as it were, a ceremony or a rite; thusiasm is the concentration, complete and solute, of a spirit, of all that is ethical and iritual and good for men. Fanaticism ards the altar, or the alb, or the outer decotion; enthusiasm seeks to recreate the inner d the ideal man of men. Fanaticism arked the priests of Jerusalem; enthusiasm arked the apostles in Galilee. Fanaticism

guards a city and keeps it sacred; enthusiasm takes a religion and makes it universal. The one guards what it will not part with, for it is its strength; the other spreads what it lives by, for it is its glory. So Christ created enthusiasts, and left the fanatics to build and possess the city and die by the hands of Rome.

But along with this wondrous power to make out of the common the great enthusiasm of humanity lies another. Did you ever think or feel what a wondrous pathos there is in the speechlessness of the common people? Think how, through long generations, they have remained at home with thoughts in them they cannot speak, with ideals before them they cannot explain, with the whole inarticulate world passionate for birth. There is a wondrous pathos in the inarticulate multitude. But yet, when the inarticulate finds speech what speech it is! All the world is dumb till one bright day a William Shakespeare is born and thereafter she is immortal and silent nevermore. The Vale of Annan is a name until one day Thomas Carlyle lives and his great Galloway voice goes wandering through the ages. Tinkers are but people to be shunned; their speech is not the speech of the parlor or of the lecture-room. One day John Bunyan lives and brings into being "Pilgrim's Progress" and a "City of Man soul" that remain things of beauty and joy forever. Give to the inarticulate the moment

of speech, and there bursts into being all that nature made, that art may follow after but can never overtake or create.

So Jesus, out of the bosom of the inarticulate, forth from the midst of the pathetically dumb, calls these men, fashions them, forms them, preaches to them, makes within them the kingdom of God to live; and lo! it lives, and their eloquence, their speech, immortal as His own, changes and saves the world.

As to the substance of His preaching—He came preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. The time He came was the time fulfilled; then the long waiting was at an end. Now was the great moment of deliverance and of speech; and this gospel of the kingdom spoke of God whose kingdom it was, and such a God! No harsh, severe fate, no blind, almighty will, no narrow, exclusive sovereign; but that gracious, infinite King, who, reigning in the heavens, reigned over all men, and sought to make in all men His reign supreme. As is the Gods, so is the realm. It is inner, "for the kingdom of heaven is within you." It is outer, for the kingdom of God is around you. It is present, for it is here. It is coming ever more progressively as the ages go on. In this realm there rules a Lord, and the Lord that rules is love; in it there are relations, and the relation Godward is at once that of subject and son, and the relation manward is at once that of Savior and brother. Within

this kingdom man knows blessedness, and into it he can enter on two great conditions—he must repent, and he must believe. Let him try to come in with his sin, and for him there is no entrance; let him try to enter out of love of profit and power, without faith, and for him it has no being. It is large enough to embrace the world, yet so small, so exclusive, that the men it embraces are men who love righteousness and have faith. This kingdom he preaches, so that men everywhere may hear, and tho they stand in outer relations where they did, they are new men, and all their world is new.

Compare this kingdom and the gospel concerning it with other kindred messages. Compare the society and the kingdom of Jesus with, say, a great pagan ideal, the ideal that lives partly in the "Republic" and partly in the laws of Plato. No more splendid discipline for the fashioning of intellect has ever been made by man than these books of ancient Plato; never a more impracticable dream—incapable of realization, and, were it capable, disastrous in its very being—was ever dreamed by man. Christ's is an ideal and a reality. It is not for the closet, but for the city and the mart. Men everywhere must be within it, and if they are within it, are new. Then there stands a realized religious ideal in what is known and named as Buddhism. With all its wealth of ethical ideal, the Buddhistic na-

)n is marked by two things—a complete sep-
ation of the initiated disciple from the
)rld and the duties that most ameliorate its
rd and painful lot; and secondly, by an
timate of life that is the child of despair,
tred of being, rather than a love of men.
here is an infinite difference between pity
r human suffering and love for human souls.
ever has the pity for human suffering been
)re nobly exprest than in Buddha; nowhere,
ve in Christ, have you the consuming, pas-
nate, saving love of souls. The difference
infinite. You may so pity suffering that
u hate life, for in living, men endure pain;
t if you love souls, then you hate sin, you
te sorrow, you hate whatever adds to the
ment of life the ingredient of pain. In
rist you have, therefore, these two things—
ect, immediate, face to face, interpene-
ted being, saved society, a world to be
ed, and you have a saved society pene-
ted and possest by the passion to save—
love that can redeem.

pass on from the Master and His personal
ssion to the apostolic mission as the con-
uation of the Master's. Here I want es-
ially to observe that the method He fol-
ed His disciples were to follow, what He
and was they were to do and be. He was
)reacher, they were to be preachers; His
ssage was the gospel of God, their message
; to be the same gospel. Now, if men are

to accomplish the work they are sent to d
by Christ, it must be in the method and th
spirit, by the gospel and the mission Jesu
gave and Jesus is.

If we take our stand on history as it ha
been fulfilled up to this present moment, wha
strikes us? Why, this; the marvelous succes
of Christ's plan. If He had gone to Jerusa
lem, think you Christianity would have eve
been anything else than redrest Judaism
Think you, had He called men who regarde
Him from above downward, as a lesson to b
used rather than obeyed, that He would hav
been anything else than a lost name in his
tory? See, by following the plan He tool
what has been accomplished! Here are we
sections and representatives of the people wh
use the English tongue. In this kingdom
away with our kin beyond the sea, in America
in our colonies, well-nigh 120,000,000 of me
use our tongue and hold our faith. Over o
the Continent of Europe 200,000,000 of me
have the same faith, disguised in varied forms
Where lies the movement and the mind of th
world? With these people, made by thes
people. They everywhere constitute the ver
heart and the very spirit of man. Take, as
type, out of the great multitude this very cit
[London], the immensest, most populous
richest, poorest, the most ubiquitous city, i
a sense, in all the experience of man; he
energies run to the uttermost parts of th

earth; her eyes are everywhere; where wealth is to be found, there some of her myriad hands are groping; where money is wanting, there some one or several of her myriad money-lenders are prepared to offer for sale; wherever there is man there is the feeling of this great city, and she seeks ever to draw toward herself from all parts of the world, to enlarge, to enrich, and to impoverish. What now stands in this great city for all that is ameliorating, progressive, orderly, potent in good? Let any stranger come up her ancient river, and high, overtopping all her towers and palaces, rises the lofty dome of St. Paul's. Is it under the dome where your men coin their money? Is it from that lordly peak they look for markets throughout the world? Nay! There, amid all their warehouses, reigning over all their daily interests, stands a symbol of their faith. Higher up the river lie the ashes of our most illustrious dead, shadowed and consecrated by the name of the Crucified. Why are they there, but to express this: the faith of our people is the most sacred thing our people have? They love to enshrine the names they love in a symbol of their faith. Pass through the streets, and mark, in places where they are needed huge hospitals rise. There, in the crowded ward where lie the suffering and the sick, moving with a soft foot, and speaking with a gentle voice, so excellent a thing in women, are those

who are set to heal and to help the suffering. There the knife of the surgeon has ceased from its cruel power of slaying, and turned into a beneficent minister of health and life: there the physician seeks to battle with grim disease and make the sound body for the sound mind to dwell in. Pass on, and you will see in every street a building consecrated to sacred use. There lives a man given up to the service of men, with the message meant for their healing, with a word meant for their saving, to be a man who is a man of God amid men and of men. Here there are books to be read, and social societies to publish and to disperse them; there are societies to shelter the innocent, prosecute the guilty; to reach out to the poor, to ameliorate the lot of the sad; societies designed to heal every ill flesh is heir to, to breathe health into sickness, to create purity in guilt, to surround helpless infancy with the strong hands of gracious protection. And if you ask what is the main spring of all these, giving them purpose, giving them power, what man dare to say other than this, "They are the creation of the Christ that preached the gospel in Galilee, and the creation of men who preach His gospel in the England of to-day."

FAUNCE

THE LIFE BEYOND

WILLIAM HERBERT PERRY FAUNCE

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THE LIFE BEYOND

Pres. WILLIAM H. P. FAUNCE, D.D.

"Questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean."—Mark 9 : 10.

WHAT the rising from the dead shall mean to us depends on what manner of men we are. No fact is the same fact for all people. The richness and power of the fact depend on the richness and power of the life into which the fact comes. What does the rising of the sun mean as it comes up out of the ocean in the morning? To the brown crag on the shore the rising of the sun means nothing at all. To the flower that clings to the top of the crag the sunrise means a thrill in the sap, an unfolding of the leaf, a deepening of the color on the petal. To the blind man standing near, the sunrise means a dim sensation of warmth and health, but no help for the inner darkness. To the lover of nature the sunrise means the sky aglow and the sea aflame, the singing of birds in the woods, and the transfiguration of the whole world.

What does Easter mean to us? To some shallow souls it means one more holiday parade; it means the skill of the florist and the milliner, the pageant and the decoration, the

lust of the eye and the pride of life. To some it means only a series of historical or metaphysical puzzles. How did Christ get out of Joseph's tomb? Who rolled the stone away? Was the vision of angels objective or subjective? Was the body of the risen Lord material? How, then did it pass through the closed doors? Was it spiritual? How, then, did He partake of the broiled fish and the honeycomb? And so, all day long, we may puzzle ourselves, losing the forest in the trees, losing our Lord in questionings about the Lord. Easter might answer all these puzzles without bringing us into the risen life. What shall the rising from the dead mean to us?

It means, first of all, that this visible earthly life is only a small section of our real life. The quality of a life which believes itself immortal is essentially different from the quality of a life which believes that death is a blank wall with nothing on the other side. We should live nobly, whether we live again or not. But the quality of a life exprest in Professor Clifford's famous epitaph: "I was not and was conceived; I lived and did a little work: I am not and grieve not," is different from the quality of a life which has entered into the meaning of those lines of Browning:

> O, if we draw a circle premature,
> Heedless of far gain,
> Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure
> Bad is our bargain.

Easter comes as a great glad protest against drawing "the circle premature." It protests against our focusing our eyes on the things immediately before us, and so losing all the great perspectives and vistas of the higher life. It protests against the thrifty shallowness of the proverb which tells us that "the bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." It tells us that the bird in the bush has a nobler song and higher flight than any that we have caught and caged. It protests against such absorption in the petty concerns of to-day that we lose the power to say "to-morrow." The religious man is one that believes in God's great to-morrow, believes that no sad memories of yesterday can spoil it, that no obstacles of this morning can hinder its coming, but that in the bright to-morrow the meaning of yesterday and to-day shall stand revealed.

The great characteristic of the nineteenth century was its constant devotion to the study of yesterday as the explanation of to-day. Our students all gave themselves up to the study of origins. They studied the etymology of words, they dug up the remains of ancient civilization, they exhumed the old utensils, the old inscriptions, the old manuscripts, they visited barbarous tribes in search of the origin of our institutions, our beliefs, our habits, as if our whole generation were saying: "If only we can find where we came

from, then we shall know what life means and what all its struggle is worth." This is all very useful; it has cast a flood of light on our problems, it has changed our world-view. Accepting it all—this study of the first steps taken by our savage ancestors in the forest—believing it, we must still say: "The value of a man is never in what he emerged from, but in what he is striving toward." The characteristics of the bird are not to be found in the broken shell from which it came, but in the nest which it builds. The meaning of Michelangelo is not in the tiny mass of protoplasm with which his life began, but in the soaring dome of St. Peter's or the titanic figures of the Sistine Chapel. The significance of true religion is to be found not chiefly in the superstitions of Patagonia, but in the lives of St. Francis, and Luther, and Jesus Christ.

The rising from the dead is, then, only another stage in the process which has been going on in this world since time began. Far back in the past, as far as thought can travel, we have reason to think this visible solar system was a nebulous formless mass. Then somehow—we know not how—there came movement into the mighty chaos; in the pictorial language of Genesis, "God said let there be light." Then came the rise of the organic kingdom—"let the earth bring forth grass." Then somehow—we know not how—

there emerged sentient life, and creatures capable of pleasure and pain walked or swam or flew in earth and sea and sky. Then somehow—no man can say how—self-consciousness emerged and man appeared, conscious of himself, his character, his duty, struggling toward an ideal until he vanishes in the grave. And is that all? After the immanent God has been realizing his thought for millenniums in producing human souls, the greatness of the product requiring countless ages for its production, then does His whole work go to pieces in an instant, vanish like a pyrotechnic that burns against the black sky for a moment and is gone? Believe it who can! Such belief is a part of the vast credulity of atheism.

Suppose you had gone to attend the launching of a noble vessel that had been years in construction. At last it stands almost complete, the builder's ideal realized, waiting to slide into the waiting sea. Can we imagine the builder saying: "Now let us take it to pieces; my ideal is realized; I simply wanted to see what I could do." The ship of man's spirit was not created in mockery or sport. It was built for a more subtle element than earth; it was built for the touch of celestial airs, and the spray of infinite seas and arrivals at ports beyond our vision. So Beethoven felt when he said, "But a small part of my music have I uttered." So Victor

Hugo perceived, when he said at the end, "There are thousands of tragedies in me waiting to be written."

Our faith in immortality thus depends on the moral strength and value of our present living. It is not the conclusion of a faultless syllogism, it is a moral attainment. The analogy of the animal kingdom seems to be against the survival of worthless human lives. The imbecile, the imbruted, the noxious and poisonous lives, shall they endure forever? On that question the Bible is silent. It simply affirms that lives entangled in the life of God must share His eternity. Because they are precious to Him, while He lives they shall live also. As the son of the strong man inherits his father's strength, and the son of the rich man inherits his father's riches, so the sons of God inherit the Father's eternal life.

But Easter should bring to us not only more positive faith in the grandeur of man's future; it should bring to us a more spiritual, and so more sensible, conception of the future life than that which has for centuries prevailed in the Christian Church. Many of our religious leaders are puzzled to-day because the public mind is no longer interested in heaven. The old hymn-books were filled with meditations on the hereafter, while our modern hymnals give the same space to calls to the service of humanity. The change which

has come about is striking. Bunyan's Pilgrim shaped his whole journey with reference to the celestial gate, while Henry Drummond's praise of the "greatest thing in the world" had little reference to any future life. Baxter wrote of the "saints' rest," but Phillips Brooks of the saints' toil and struggle.

Is this change in emphasis because of a fatal satisfaction that has come to the modern world? Surely the world was never more dissatisfied than now. Is it because of loss of faith in unseen realities? Surely, all the science and philosophy of our time are giving us new reasons for believing in unseen realities, and materialism is utterly out of date.

One reason for our silence about the future is that in our hearts we have no desire for the conventional heaven of our childhood. The Oriental picture of a golden city, whose chief occupation is singing, does not attract or deeply influence the modern mind. The thing we picture in the books of conventional piety is not the thing our noblest and bravest spirits want. It is, I venture to say, a heaven founded more on Milton and Bunyan, or on the Apocalypse, than on the teaching of our Lord Himself. The heaven of our childhood is a passive realm, a region of negation, acquiescence, and therefore repellent to the strong men, who desire nothing so much as a

worthy task. "Rest for the weary?"—there is no rest to the normal healthy man like the assurance of success in noble enterprise. A well-known school-teacher, who has given a life to teaching, recently wrote: "My life work is nearly done; I shall soon enter on the eternal vacation." Did he not realize that there could be no heavier penalty for an evil life than an endless vacation? Never will immortality again become a power in the modern world, until we reconceive it, passing beyond the Oriental imagery of Milton and John into the deeper and more spiritual teaching of our Lord.

In the thought of Jesus Christ the future life very clearly means three things: responsibility, fellowship, progress.

Constantly Jesus is insisting that the life beyond, like true life here, means labor and service. And all labor, if it be genuine, means struggle and risk and anxiety and battle. Through most of the phrases in which Jesus described His own expectations of the hereafter we hear the sound of mighty enterprise, of vast responsibility, and hard, tho glorious, achievement. To one man who enters the heavenly kingdom, the King says: "Have thou authority over ten cities." To another He says: "I will make thee ruler over many things." To His disciples Jesus says: "Ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The invitation to every victorious

saint is: "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." And what the joy of Christ is we know when He adds: "My father worketh hitherto and I work."

Shall Livingstone pour out his life to open up the dark continent here, and shall there be no sacred mission, no exploration, no conquest of difficulty there? Shall Wesley expend his limitless energy on two continents to bring God into the lives of men, and then subside into a pictured cherub, with no holy war to wage, no message to the weak and ignorant, no cup of cold water in the name of a disciple? Such a heaven is as far from the teaching of Christ as it is from our own desire.

No less clear is Christ's thought of future fellowship. This world is full of lonely souls, eager for a companionship which life fails to bring. It is pathetic to realize how many men we touch, and how few we know. In every city are men and women we would gladly commune with, give them our inmost thought in exchange for theirs. But mere geography prevents, or social barriers rise high between us, or the simple pressure of the daily cares keeps us isolated and lonely. The partitions of occupation and family divide throughout life those who were born to be together. The tragedy of life is not to part with friends—it is to stay with friends through all the years and fail to recognize

them, to see their bodies beside us and vainly grope to find their souls.

Christ's picture of heaven touches very lightly on crowns and palms. Rather He describes it thus: "With me in paradise."

My knowledge of that life is small
The eye of faith is dim
But 'tis enough that Christ knows all
And I shall be with Him.

And to be with Him is to be with all who are most like Him. God will have the best souls of the race in His heaven, whether they can sign our articles of faith or not. The only final test is spiritual likeness. And Christ's thought of the future is full of the sense of the crowding of great personalities into a glorious fellowship. "They shall come," He says, "from the east and the west and the north and the south"—from the East with its brooding thought and the West with its restless action, from the North with its stern sense of duty and the South with its loyalty and chivalry—they shall come who have conquered in the fight. The men we longed to know and could not, the comrades in faith separated by barriers of race and nation and creed, they shall come into that heaven which is all sufficiently described when Christ says: "Where I am, there shall my servant be."

And an equally important element in our

hought of the future is that of progress and easeless advance. "They shall walk with me n white." This walking onward, this per- etual advance in knowledge and wisdom, in urity and power, is at the center of any orthy thought of the hereafter. A fixt and hangeless state, a petrified bliss, a statuesque eace, as of some divine art gallery, is at ariance with all we know of the laws of hap- iness and with all we know of the ceaseless ctivity of our Lord. Rather must we be- eve that there, as here, joy will be found only n perpetual progress, in climbing new heights f knowledge, in conquering weakness, in aining power of insight, in caring little for ur own salvation, but much for the welfare f all the children in the Father's house.

Are these, then, the essence of heaven—re- ponsibility for noble enterprise, fellowship ith the truest and noblest of the race, and easeless growth in the divine life? Such a eaven we can have here and now. Jesus alled Himself the Son of man which is in eaven. Have we been getting out of fellow- ip with Christian effort, allowing the small ritations of life to break its deeper unity? ave we been shunning cooperation with the reat sacrificial souls of our time, withdraw- g into isolation and base contentment? hen we have been going away from heaven, eering straight toward the "outer dark- ss." But have we found the joy of self-

surrender for the sake of Christ's kingdom have we joined hands with all the good and true of our age to make human life more fair, more noble, more divine? Then we are entering already the only heaven there is, the realm where God's will is at once our law and our strength and our song. This is to rise from the dead, and to sit at the right hand of power.

FITCHETT

THE ULTIMATE ARGUMENT FOR HUMAN HOPE

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THE ULTIMATE ARGUMENT FOR HUMAN HOPE

The Rev. W. H. Fitchett, B.A., LL.D.

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"—Luke 11 : 13.

Christ's words rest on the assumption that we carry in ourselves—in what is best in ourselves—a revelation of what, in the measure of His infinity, God is, and must be. He teaches that in the make of our own souls may be read—in characters dim and imperfect no doubt, but still written there by the finger of God Himself—a hint of what God is. We are sure that He must at least be more, and better, than His own creatures.

Now the world is in a mood of suspicion about anthropomorphic conceptions of God. The Bible declares that God "made man in His own image"; and, says a skeptical wit, "man has ever since been occupied in repaying the compliment, and making God in his image." Who can forget, or, for the matter of that, can quite forgive, Matthew Arnold's description of the Trinity, as conceived by the average churchgoer, resembling "three Lord Shaftesburys."

But what else is there in the whole round of the visible universe which can reflect and

interpret God except the soul of man? Shall it be the height of the heavens, the order and majesty of the stars, the glory of the sunset that flames in the western sky? Shall it be the deep voice of the sea or the sound of the thunder rolling among the hills? Shall it be the power of which the physical universe is the expression, the power, say, that sleeps in the mysterious ether, in which all the worlds float like bubbles in some measureless sea?

But what we call the "height of the heavens" is only the little curve in the emptiness of space which defines our poor eyesight; and how can the emptiness of space, tho multiplied to infinity, give us a picture of the face of God? What are the stars save huge aggregations of unconscious matter, who know nothing of their own glory, still less of the glory of Him who made them. What is the splendor of the sunset but physical vibrations of greater or less intensity striking on the optic nerve, running through them to the brain, and woven by the coordinating mind behind the brain into certain relations? "It is the understanding," says Kant, "that makes nature." The miracle of color, the piled glory of the sunset is not in the western sky, it is in our own brains. It represents nothing more than a change in the gray matter of the brain.

What is the roll of the thunder or the sound of the calling sea-tides heard through th

night—"the sound of mighty waters rolling evermore"—but vibrations of the shaken air, empty of meaning except such as the mind in ourselves gives them?

Science has made such discoveries of the power manifested in the universe that it is almost inevitable some people should come to mistake it for God, or at least for the highest interpretation of God. Even a spirit so fine as Matthew Arnold made this blunder. His definition of God is "a Power not ourselves that makes for righteousness."

No doubt the universe is flooded with inconceivable power. We are bathed in a sea of omnipotence. The terrific energy that slumbers in the ether, an element which evades our sense, but on which all the worlds are carried, and of which gravitation itself may be but a by-product; the mystic currents of electricity, a force equally unknown; the power that casts the planets, like stones from some infinite sling, through space, and yet keeps them running in curves so perfect, through orbits so vast, and at a speed so inconceivable—the sum of all these forms of power is beyond our conception.

And yet unconscious force, multiplied to no matter what extent, is, as an object of worship, as ignoble as the fetish-worship of African savages. A single thrill of moral feeling—the impulse in a boy's conscience when he refuses to tell a lie—is nobler than

all the forces which stream from all the suns, tho they run through immeasurable space and persist for immeasurable time.

We ought to have wit enough to see and courage to say that the whole circle of the material universe is, as a matter of fact, less than we are ourselves; for we possess the supreme endowment of reason. We can measure the terrific, but mindless, forces about us. We can use them. We can make them the servants of our wants. We may even feel a touch of contempt for them if they are offered to us as the ultimate fact of the universe or as the final expression of what God is. For we know we have what they lack—the sublime quality of analyzing, interpreting, governing mind.

It is easy to disparage man. If he is set against the background of the stars and measured by the foot-rule or by pounds avoirdupois he seems nothing better than an insect; a "two-legged ant" of microscopic scale, a microbe invisible except to the microscope, set on the flying-wheel of the rushing earth. And yet this "two-legged ant," this microscopic atom, hides strange elements in the mystery of his nature, elements that give him a kind of lordship over the material universe. He can read the secrets of that universe. He can untwist the many-colored cord of light. He puts his measuring-tape round the sun. He weighs the far-off, innumerable stars. He

makes the stormy sea his pathway, the lightning his servant. Religion is a witness to the fact that he can know God; science is the proof that, in Kepler's sublime phrase, "he can think God's thoughts after Him."

And all this is because, as the Bible declares, he, and he alone, is "made in the image of God." His endowment of reason, his capacity for love, that glory of a free will which stands among the blind forces of the universe without parallel, which he possesses—all this makes him a mirror, broken and dim no doubt, but still a mirror that reflects God. Man has a right to declare that in the whole circle of the visible universe there is nothing which interprets God but his own soul.

And exactly this is the starting-point of Christ's logic. He points to what is best and highest in our own nature, and bids us find there a proof of what exists in the mind of God. The difference in scale does not cancel the likeness in kind. A bit of broken glass in a child's hand is not the sun, but it can reflect the sun. A drop of dew is not the sea, but it obeys the same laws as the sea.

Christ goes on to show us at what point our nature is the closest and most vivid reflection of the character of God. He does not take the imagination of the poet, the brain of the scientist, the intellect of the statesman. These are the qualities we admire; we grow lyrical

in praise of them. But Christ turns to quite another feature of our nature. He takes one aspect of love—the answer love makes to the challenge of want in the object loved—and He puts this in the shape of a homely domestic fact of which we can all judge since it lies so near to us. Here is that moving thing, a little child's hunger, set face to face with the love from which the child itself has sprung, the love that burns in a mother's nature. We are evil, selfish, imperfect; what we in ourselves call "love" is itself too often nothing better than a refined selfishness. But imagine a child, with wasted cheeks, white lips, and trembling limbs—a child faint with hunger—stretching out little hands for bread. If it were some strange child, met by chance in the street, linked to us by no tie of kinship, of alien blood and speech, yet its want would be felt as a challenge that put our humanity on its trial. A devil might mock that need; a devil might offer the hungry little lips a stone for bread or put a coiled scorpion into the trembling little hands instead of food. And it would be the act of a devil. Why, as Blake declared:

> A starved dog at the city gate
> Bespeaks the ruin of the State.

What is the justification of those strong lines? Even a starved dog at the gate or in the streets of a city is a proof that in that city

pity is dead and want is denied its rights. And in man or nation that is a condition that is morally evil, not to say devilish.

But imagine a mother with her little child's hunger calling to her! She will not stop to reason, to count pence, to weigh her comfort against the child's want. A passion of pity leaps up in her that is overmastering. The hunger to give in her heart is as keen as the hunger for bread in the starved child's flesh and blood. It is an impulse elemental, primitive, resistless.

And Christ teaches us that in that very impulse lies a revelation of God. It is a reflection of something divine. Where does it come from except from Him? It is in us because it is in Him. God must possess that impulse, and possess it in the scale of His own nature, or whence do we get it? Would a God who Himself is stirred by no passion of pity for the need of His children have touched our broken nature to issues so fine? If that be the case, He has made us better than He is Himself. If He does not possess this impulse, He is morally lower than we are. If He could give a stone instead of bread to a hungry child, He stands in the same category with devils.

But that is impossible. "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see?" The logic is final. It runs through strange heights and depths.

It holds good everywhere; and, most of all, it must hold good in character. He who has so made us that the spectacle of want in an object loved is a distress, an appeal so keen that it challenges every resource we possess, must have in His own nature something that not merely corresponds to this: it is the consummation of this. Pity in us is but the drop of dew; in Him it is the sea. Our love is the broken bit of glass; it reflects the sun. But love in God is the sun. And exactly this is Christ's logic.

Then Christ goes on to apply this great argument to the supreme want of our broken nature, the gift of the Holy Spirit, that sublime spiritual force by which Christ's redemption is made effective in us. For our nature, assailed by temptation, torn by evil forces, imprisoned in darkness, what need is there more urgent than that of the mighty offices of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, the source of light, the Spirit that convinces of sin and righteousness, the Spirit that regenerates, the Spirit that bears witness with our spirits to the pardoning grace of God?

We are tempted to think that "the gift of the Holy Spirit" is a spiritual luxury, the endowment of rare men called to great tasks—men like Thomas à Kempis, or Francis of Assisi, the saints and leaders of the race, who emerge in history at remote intervals. The apostles had it when the rushing mighty wind

of Pentecost had blown upon them. Luther had it, and it made him the monk that shook the world. Wesley had it, and as a result he set in movement a spiritual force that has changed the history of the modern Church. But do we need it? Is it possible to us men and women called to no great tasks, fighting with commonplace temptations, living obscure lives?

Everywhere throughout the Christian Church is to be seen the tragedy of men and women trying to live Christian lives without the Holy Ghost. That great and splendid doctrine of the witness which the Holy Spirit bears to the grace of God runs the peril of being one of the forgotten truths of Christian theology.

The plain fact is that our souls need the breath and energy of the divine Spirit exactly as our bodies need daily bread. Science has ascertained what are the constituent elements of light. They consist of a certain number of rays—red, orange, yellow and the others; and light itself would perish, it would become something else than light, if, say, the red rays or the violet rays disappeared from among its elements. And one of the classic passages of the New Testament gives us a list of the constituent elements of religion. They are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

It is impossible to think of religion as a

human experience which omits any of these graces. What is religion worth which does not create love; which fails to set joy singing in the life; which does not fold peace, like a divine atmosphere, round the soul? What is the value of a religion which does not make the temper patient and the lips gentle; which does not bear all the fruits of goodness, and put every appetite and impulse of life under the control of conscience?

But whence do these graces come? They are not native to us; we can not produce them by any effort of will. They are "the fruits of the Spirit," the direct creation of the Holy Spirit.

A blossoming fruit-tree in springtime is a parable of spiritual facts. These blossoms —each one a flame of color, a fountain of perfume—whence do they come? They are not artificial; they can not be put on from the outside. Behind each blossom is a line of invisible forces that run to the very crown of the universe. And the human soul, under the forces of the Holy Spirit, is like a garden to which the miracle of the springtime has come. It is blest of sun and rain and earth. A thousand forces stir in it; forces that stream from the arched heavens, that thrill in the brown soil, that whisper in the falling rain, that call in the blowing winds. The flowers come because they can not help coming—scent and color and life are inevitable.

The buds swell, the invisible perfume makes the air fragrant under the action of invisible and resistless forces.

Now the unconfest, perpetual doubt is whether that sublime gift of the Holy Spirit is possible to us. And it is to answer that doubt that Christ draws this picture of a mother who looks on the wasted cheeks, the dim eyes, the trembling limbs of her child—her child dying for food. What is the answer which, even in our imperfect nature, love makes to such an appeal? The mother must give; she ought to give; it is her joy to give; is an impossibility not to give. And Christ declares this deep, inextinguishable impulse in human nature to be the interpretation—the faint and broken reflection in human terms—of the mood of God toward us. The impulse that makes it impossible for a tender mother to do anything else than give bread to her child's hunger is the same in kind as that which makes God willing to give us His Holy Spirit.

Now this is in itself a gospel; but it is a gospel too small for the actual truth. It gives us only a hint—such a hint as a spark may give of the sun, or a dew-drop of the immeasurable sea—of God's mood toward us. "How much more," asks Christ—not "can," but "will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask?" Surely as "much more" as the sun is more than the spark, or

the sea than the dew-drop, or the Infinite than the finite.

To answer Christ's question, in a word, we must ask another: How much "more" is God than man? By how much does the Infinite exceed the finite?

Let our frailty be measured against God's eternity. Our little lives are rounded with a sleep. Betwixt the cradle and the grave are only a few ticks of the clock. But God packs a thousand centuries into a bit of chalk or into the flame of a gas-jet.

By how much does God's omnipotence exceed our weakness? We are just beginning to spell out the alphabet of God's power, and it overwhelms us. Sir Oliver Lodge has shown that in every cubic millimeter of ether—silent, invisible, intangible ether—there slumbers as much energy as a great power-station could put out in thirty million years. God's omnipotence lies about us as the ocean lies about a speck of sea jelly.

By how much, again, does God's wisdom outrun our little knowledge? There is a proof of the wedlock of infinite power with infinite wisdom in God's works of which our very senses may judge. The planet on which we dwell, with all its seas and cities, is whirling on its axis at a speed which, taken at a point of the equator, carries us through a thousand miles of space every hour. The planet itself resembles a stone fastened by a

string 93,000,000 miles long to the sun, and whirling through space at the rate of 66,000 miles every hour, or 1,500,000 miles a day. The whole band of planets to which we belong, in addition, is rushing toward some unknown point in space at the rate of more than 52,000 miles an hour.

The earth under our feet, in brief, is shaken with three unlike motions: it turns on its axis at the rate of 1,000 miles an hour; it is flying round the sun at the rate of 66,000 miles an hour; in company with the sun and its sister planets it is rushing through space toward some unguessed goal at the rate of 52,000 miles an hour. And yet so perfect is the soft equipoise of God's worlds, so exact is the balance of all the forces which do His will, that the combined rush of these three movements is not enough to bend the leaf of a flower. Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the power of God! How "much more" is God than we are in contrivance and knowledge and power? As much as the Infinite is greater than the finite.

Now this interval betwixt God and ourselves is usually made an argument against faith. It seems to put God beyond all comparison with ourselves. God is so utterly beyond our thoughts, how can we be sure of what He is or of what He will do? Are any terms of love possible across an interval so vast? "No love," doubt whispers, "can

stretch like a chain of gold betwixt God in the height of His power and man in the depth of his need." In resource God is greater than we are by infinite degrees; and if His resources were only carried in a mother's hand, or linked to a mother's love, what a final answer that would be to all the whispering fears that perplex us!

Now this is exactly the doubt that Christ undertakes to answer. He does not say, "How much more can your heavenly Father give?" That is only a question of resource, and about that we have no doubt. But "how much more will your heavenly Father give?" That is a question of character; it is a question which belongs to love's realm, and Christ answers it in love's terms. If we want to know how much greater God's willingness to give His Holy Spirit to us is than a mother's willingness to give bread to her child, we must take the interval betwixt His strength and our frailty, betwixt His eternity and our poor dying life, betwixt His infinite perfection and our broken imperfection. In this measure the willingness of love in God to give exceeds the willingness to give in a human mother's heart.

And it must be so. This is not some strange, incredible dream, about which sentiment may sing hymns, but which science must reject. Science could not have discovered this truth, for it deals only with phenomena. But when Christ, who has come to our race that

He may reveal the Father, proclaims this truth, then science countersigns it. The ratio betwixt God and man must hold good at every point. The visible universe gives us the scale of the invisible and spiritual order, exactly as the broken arc of a circle will enable a mathematician to describe the whole circle. Give a geometrician the first figure of a series and the law of the series, and he asks no more. He will give you the whole series. The ratio betwixt God and ourselves must run through all realms and to all heights of character. It must be as high in the moral realm as it is in the physical.

God, we know, exceeds us by all the measures of infinity in the lower ranges of His nature—in power, in wisdom. Is it credible that at the highest point of all, where love sits and reigns, He suddenly shrinks and becomes less than we? Human love is the spark, but God's love is the sun; the one is the dew-drop, the other is the immeasurable sea; one is limited and imperfect, the other is perfect and infinite. But we can argue from the spark to the sun, from the dew-drop to the sea, from the imperfect to the perfect. And Christ teaches us that the great logic which lifts up our hope to the height of God's perfection, and links it to that perfection, is final.

Are God's heavens higher than the roof of man's little house? Is the strength that car-

ries all the stars greater than that which lies in the palm of man's hand? Do God's thoughts, running in infinite curves of contriving wisdom, exceed man's dim and broken knowledge? No one doubts this. And in that tremendous ratio, Christ declares, God's pity is more tender, more generous, more enduring than the tenderest pity that ever stirred a human heart.

"How much more?"—that is a challenge which can never find a complete and final answer. In some high mood of spiritual emotion and faith we catch a vision of God's love—of its designs concerning us, of the gifts it holds out to us—which dazzles us. But even at that highest point of faith and of vision Christ meets us with His great challenge—"how much more" God has, and is, than even the highest of our broken thoughts can read.

The horizon seems to define the landscape; but as you travel toward it it runs ever back, revealing new landscapes, and still new landscapes. And God's love is like the horizon: it hides landscapes unseen and unguessed. Paul's strange paradox is literally true. We may know God's love with ever-expanding knowledge; yet the ampler our knowledge becomes the more absolutely we realize that this mystery of love in the heart of God "passes knowledge."

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4835

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